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THE CHRISTIANS DEFENCE against the Fears of DEATH

THE CHRISTIAN'S DEFENCE AGAINST THE FEARS of DEATH, WITH *Seasonable Directions* HOW TO Prepare Ourselves to Die well.

Written originally in *FRENCH*,

By the late Reverend DIVINE of the Protestant Church of *PARIS*,

CHARLES DRELINCOURT.

Translated into *ENGLISH*,

By *MARIUS D'ASSIGNY*, B.D.

The TWENTY-SECOND EDITION new Corrected:

With an ACCOUNT of the AUTHOR, and his LAST MINUTES.

LONDON:

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THE PREFACE TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

THE true Character of Monſieur Drelincourt, *the Author of theſe excellent Meditations, we find publiſhed by Mr.* Bayle, *in his great* Hiſtorical Dictionary, *&c. as followeth:*

CHARLES DRELINCOURT, Miniſter of the Church of *Paris*, was born the 10th of *July* at *Sedan*, where his Father was admitted to an honourable Office, being Secretary to *Henry Robert de la Mark*, Duke of *Bouillon*, and Sovereign Prince of *Sedan*; afterwards he was advanced to be Secretary to the chief Council of that City. His Son *Charles* was put to ſtudy Ethicks and Divinity in that Univerſity, but was ſent to *Saumur*, to complete his Philoſophy under Mr. *Duncan*. He was ordained Miniſter in *June*, 1618, and began the Exerciſe of his Function near *Langres*, continuing there until he was called to the Church of *Paris* in *March*, 1620. He was married, in the Year 1625, to an only Child of a rich Merchant of *Paris*, called Monſieur *Balduck*, who had newly embraced the Proteſtant Religion. Providence bleſſed him and his Wife with a numerous Iſſue, he having had ſixteen Children by her; and gave no leſs Succeſs to his Miniſtry. His Sermons were very powerful: But his

chief Talent was in comforting the Sick, and performing all other neceſſary Offices of a careful Paſtor. He was very faithful and zealous, in reſpect of his own Congregation and others; his Judgement being always deſired in Matters of Moment. We cannot ſufficiently commend the Services he hath rendered to the Church of God by his many Writings he hath publiſhed, whether we examine his Books of Devotion, or of Controverſy. There is ſo much Piety contained in the former, and ſo many excellent Texts of Scripture explained in the latter, that many religious Perſons both have, and daily do find ſeaſonable Conſolation. That which he hath written againſt the Church of *Rome*, hath wonderfully ſtrengthened the Proteſtant Profeſſors: For by the Arguments that he brings, the Ignorant and Unlearned have been able to confound the Monks and Prieſts, and to maintain the Principles of their Religion againſt the ſubtileſt Miſſionaries; ſo that his Writings have cauſed him to be eſteemed *the Scourge of the* Roman *Diſputants*. Nevertheleſs, as he was beloved of the contrary Party, ſo he was highly eſteemed by the greateſt Lords of the Reformed Religion, as the Duke *De la Force*, the Mareſchals of *Chatillon*, *De Gaſtion* and *Turenne*, and by the Lady *De la Tremouille*, &c. He had alſo great Reſpect paid him by the frequent Viſits of Ambaſſadors from ſeveral foreign Princes and States. He was a Perſon who expreſſed a particular Eſteem and Veneration for the Church of *England*, as appears by his Letters to Dr. *Durell*. He died the 3d of *November*, 1666, in ſuch an excellent and devout Diſpoſition of Mind, as may be expected in a Perſon who was animated with an holy Zeal, and had, with an unwearied Diligence, conſecrated all his Study and Labours to the Glory of God, and the Service of his Church. He was more frequent in Prayer towards the Concluſion of his Life; And when he was private and alone, he never heard the Clock ſtrike, but he fell upon his Knees in Prayer to God.

This

This is the approved Character published of our eminent Divine. After a long Experience and Practice amongst departing Souls, and in the Houses of Mourning, at the Request of some of his Congregation, who mightily approved of the proper and seasonable Arguments that he made use of to fortify dying Persons against the Apprehensions of Death, suitable to their Conditions and Temper, he published his Book of Consolations. *About twenty Editions have been printed in* France, *and one at* Avignon, *in the* Pope's *Dominions, with a Suppression of the Reverend Author's Name. How many Impressions have been published in* Holland, Germany, *and elsewhere, I cannot determine. We find it translated into several Languages, but it was not in our Mother-Tongue, until, at the Request of the Author's* Son, *late Dean of* Armagh *in* Ireland, *I translated it into* English: *What Reception it hath met with amongst us, let this Twenty-second Impression declare. I shall therefore judge it needless, after so many publick Testimonies of an universal Approbation, amongst Christians of all Professions, to speak any Thing in Commendation of this* Defence against the Fears of Death. *How serviceable it may be to Divines in Funeral Sermons, in visiting the Sick, the Poor and Afflicted, and how proper to be left as Legacies to surviving Friends, at Funerals, I leave to others to judge, who shall sincerely desire to promote the Salvation of Souls.*

And now I cannot but take some Notice here of the high Esteem and Commendation that a late Apparition, too well attested to be slighted, hath given of this Book. An exact Account of it you have in the printed Relation hereunto prefixed. To reject all Narratives of this Kind as fictitious, argues, in my Judgement, as great an Error, Weakness and Prejudice, as to believe all that is reported of Apparitions. This comes to us clothed with all the Appearance and Circumstances of Truth, that may reasonably be expected in this Case. So that none but an unbelieving Sadducee, *or a profane Atheist, will offer to question the Reality. To confirm the Possibility and Truth*

of some Apparitions, none can deny, that by this Means our good GOD *hath conveyed and confirmed to us several of the Mysteries of our* holy Religion; *as the Conception, Birth, Incarnation, Resurrection, and glorious Ascension of our great* Messiah, *by the Apparition of Angels. And how often those heavenly Spirits were formerly visible in human Shapes for the Advantage, Information, and Safeguard of the Pious, the Word of God sufficiently declares. Now, as we live in such an* incredulous Age, *that will not believe* GOD, *and his Divine Oracles, though attested by the working of Miracles, concerning the future State of the Righteous und Wicked, but requires a new Testimony and Evidence, as the Return of Souls from the Dead, to witness the Happiness of Heaven, the Torments of Hell, and the Immortality of the Soul: Who knows, but to render Men more inexcusable,* GOD *may condescend, that a departed Soul, or its good Angel in its Stead, may appear to declare these infallible and undoubted Truths to an unbelieving World? But we find by Experience, as in this Case, that this Kind of Evidence is far more liable to Exceptions, to be contradicted and rejected, as uncertain and fabulous, and sooner than the sacred Methods that our wise* GOD *hath taken to persuade Men to the divine Doctrines of our* Salvation: *As* Abraham *declares in the Parable of the rich Glutton, condemned to the Flames of Hell,* If they will not believe *Moses* and the Prophets; *we may with more Reason add, if they will not believe* CHRIST *and his Apostles, and so many wonderful Miracles attesting* GOD's *Omnipotency and Revelations from above,* neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the Dead.

I must here acquaint my Reader, that whereas in the former Impressions of this Book, some Errata *have escaped, whereby the Author's Sense and Meaning may not be so clearly expressed as in the Original: And whereas also upon some Subjects, our Reverend Author distastes the Reader by too frequent Repetions in his Prayers, containing Matters and Arguments of the foregoing Chapters: These and such trivial Objections have caused several Persons*

Perſons to find Fault not only with the Tranſlation, but even with the Book itſelf. To remedy therefore any Thing of this Nature, and to prevent all Complaints of this Kind, and that ſo excellent and uſeful a Treatiſe *may appear in our own proper and natural Language, not differing in any Thing material from the* French *Copy; but ſuited, as much as conveniently it may be, to the nicer Palates of our preſent Age; I have, in this Edition taken the Pains to compare this* Tranſlation *with a Book printed at* Berlin, *the Court of the King of* Pruſſia, 1698. *I have been in this more exact, and have altered ſome Words and Phraſes, expreſſing more plainly the Author's Meaning, and in Terms more agreeable with our preſent familiar Way of ſpeaking. Beſides, in this Edition of* Berlin, *I have met with two or three Paſſages which are not in the former* French *Impreſſions, and which I judged not convenient to be omitted. Some of the Prayers that ſeemed to prolix, I have abbreviated, comprehending only the principal Matters. And that nothing may be wanting in this Edition, that might more contribute to the Reader's Satisfaction, I have here rendered in* Engliſh *the laſt remarkable Paſſages of this pious and excellent Miniſter of* CHRIST, *never before printed in our own Tongue, as we find them at the End of the forementioned Book: that ye may here at once, as in a Mirror ſee the Behaviour, religious Speeches, Faith, Patience, and Reſignation to the Will of* GOD, *of our Reverend Divine at his Deceaſe, reduced into Practice, according to the excellent Advices and Conſolations that he recommends to us, to arm ourſelves againſt the Apprehenſions and Approaches of Death.*

I have no more to add: But I beſeech our merciful and heavenly Father, to grant us all the Grace, the like Faith, and Chriſtian Reſolution, that we may not fear Death, nor its Conſequences; but may be always ready prepared and provided to embrace it with Joy and Submiſſion to the Pleaſure of GOD, and

the Decrees of Heaven, whenever our Almighty Creator and Redeemer ſhall think fit to ſummon us, and take us to himſelf.

M. D.

THIS Book in the Original hath been ſo well approved of by all Perſons, though of different Judgements in Religion, that it hath been about twenty Times printed in *France*, beſides what hath been done in *Holland*, and elſewhere in other Languages: It is of very great Uſe to Divines for Funeral Sermons, and is very fit to be given away by well-diſpoſed Perſons at Funerals, and of excellent Uſe to every Chriſtian Reader.

A

TRUE RELATION

OF THE

APPARITION

OF ONE

Mrs. *VEAL*,

The next DAY after her DEATH;

TO ONE

Mrs. *BARGRAVE*,

AT CANTERBURY:

The Eighth of *September*, 1705.

Which APPARITION recommends the Perusal of *DRELINCOURT's* Book of *Consolations against the Fears of* DEATH.

THE

PREFACE.

THIS *Relation is Matter of Fact, and attended with ſuch Circumſtances, as may induce any reaſonable Man to believe it. It was ſent by a Gentleman, a Juſtice of Peace, at* Maidſtone *in* Kent, *and a very intelligent Perſon, to his Friend in* London, *as it is here worded: Which Diſcourſe is atteſted by a very ſober and underſtanding Gentleman, a Kinſman of the ſaid Gentlewoman's, who lives in* Canterbury, *within a few Doors of the Houſe in which the within-named Mrs.* Bargrave *lived; who believes his Kinſwoman to be of ſo diſcerning a Spirit, as not to be put upon by any Fallacy; and who poſitively aſſured him, that the whole Matter as it is related and laid down, is really true; and what ſhe herſelf had in the ſame Words (as near as may be) from Mrs.* Bargrave's *own Mouth, who ſhe knows, had no Reaſon to invent and publiſh ſuch a Story, or any Deſign to forge*

forge and tell a Lye, being a Woman of much Honesty and Virtue, and her whole Life a Course, as it were, of Piety. The Use which we ought to make of it, is to consider, That there is a Life to come after this, and a just GOD, *who will retribute to every one according to the Deeds done in the Body; and therefore to reflect upon our past Course of Life we have led in the World; that our Time is short and uncertain; and that if we would escape the Punishment of the Ungodly, and receive the Reward of the Righteous, which is the laying hold of Eternal Life, we ought, for the Time to come, to return to* GOD *by a speedy Repentance, ceasing to do Evil, and learning to do well: To seek after* GOD *early, if haply he may be found of us, and lead such Lives for the future, as may be well pleasing in his Sight.*

A RELA-

A

RELATION

OF THE

APPARITION

OF

Mrs. *VEAL.*

THIS Thing is so rare in all its Circumstances and on so good Authority, that my Reading and Conversation have not given me any Thing like it: It is fit to gratify the most ingenious and serious Enquirer. Mrs. *Bargrave* is the Person to whom Mrs. *Veal* appeared after her Death: She is my intimate Friend, and I can avouch for her Reputation, for these last fifteen or sixteen Years, on my own Knowledge; and I can confirm the good character she had from her Youth, to the Time of my Acquaintance; though since this Relation, she is calumniated by some People, that are Friends to the Brother of Mrs. *Veal*, who appeared; who think the Relation of this Appearance

pearance to be a Reflection, and endeavour what they can to blaſt Mrs. *Bargrave's* Reputation, and to laugh the Story out of Countenance. But by the Circumſtances thereof, and the chearful Diſpoſition of Mrs. *Bargrave*, notwithſtanding the ill Uſage of a very wicked Huſband, there is not yet the leaſt Sign of Dejection in her Face; nor did I ever hear her let fall a deſponding or murmuring Expreſſion; nay, not when actually under her Huſband's Barbarity, which I have been Witneſs to, and ſeveral other Perſons of undoubted Reputation.

Now you muſt know, Mrs. *Veal* was a Maiden Gentlewoman of about Thirty Years of Age, and for ſome Years laſt paſt had been troubled with Fits, which were perceived coming on her, by her going off from her Diſcourſe very abruptly, to ſome Impertinence: She was maintained by an only Brother, and kept his Houſe in *Dover*. She was a very pious Woman, and her Brother a very ſober Man, to all Appearance; but now he does all he can to null or quaſh the Story. Mrs. *Veal* was intimately acquainted with Mrs. *Bargrave* from her Chidhood. Mrs. *Veal's* Circumſtances were then mean; her Father did not take Care of his Children as he ought, ſo that they were expoſed to Hardſhips: And Mrs. *Bargrave* in thoſe Days had as unkind a Father, tho' ſhe wanted neither for Food nor Clothing, whilſt Mrs. *Veal* wanted for both, inſomuch that ſhe would often ſay, *Mrs.* Bargrave, *you are not only the beſt, but the only Friend I have in the World; and no Circumſtance in Life ſhall ever diſſolve my Friendſhip.* They would often condole each others adverſe Fortunes, and read together DRELINCOURT *upon Death*, and other good Books: And ſo, like two Chriſtian Friends they comforted each other under their Sorrow.

Some Time after, Mr. *Veal's* Friends got him a Place in the Cuſtom Houſe at *Dover*, which occaſioned Mrs. *Veal*, by little and little, to fall off from her Intimacy with Mrs. *Bargrave*, though there was never

never any such Thing as a Quarrel, but an Indifferency came on by Degrees, till at last Mrs. *Bargrave* had not seen her in two Years and a Half; though above a Twelvemonth of the Time, Mrs. *Bargrave* hath been absent from *Dover*, and this last Half-Year has been in *Canterbury* about two Months of the Time, dwelling in an House of her own.

In this House, on the Eighth of *September*, One Thousand seven Hundred and Five, she was sitting alone in the Forenoon, thinking over her unfortunate Life, and arguing herself into a due Resignation to Providence, though her condition seemed hard. *And* said she, *I have been provided for hitherto, and doubt not but I shall be still; and am well satisfied, that my Afflictions shall end, when it is most fit for me:* And then took up her Sewing-work, which she had no sooner done, but she hears a Knocking at the Door. She went to see who was there, and this proved to be Mrs. *Veal* her old Friend, who was in a Riding-habit: At that Moment of Time the Clock struck Twelve at Noon.

Madam, says Mrs. *Bargrave*, *I am surprised to see you, you have been so long a Stranger*; but told her, *she was glad to see her*, and offered to salute her; which Mrs. *Veal* complied with, till their Lips almost touched; and then Mrs. *Veal* drew her Hand cross her own Eyes, and said, *I am not very well*; and so waved it. She told Mrs. *Bargrave* she was going a Journey, and had a great Mind to see her first: But, says Mrs. *Bargrave*. "How came you to "take a Journey alone? I am amazed at it, because "I know you have a fond Brother." *Oh!* says Mrs. *Veal*, *I gave my Brother the Slip, and came away, because I had so great a Desire to see you before I took my Journey.* So Mrs. *Bargrave* went in with her into another Room within the first; and Mrs. *Veal* sat her down in an Elbow-Chair, in which Mrs. *Bargrave* was sitting, when she heard Mrs. *Veal* knock. Then says Mrs. *Veal*, "My dear Friend,

" I am come to renew our old Friendſhip again, and " beg your Pardon for my Breach of it; and if you " can forgive me, you are the beſt of Women." " O, " ſays Mrs. *Bargrave*, do not mention ſuch a Thing; " I have not had an uneaſy Thought about it; I can " eaſily forgive it." " What did you think of me?" ſaid Mrs. *Veal*. Says Mrs. *Bargrave*, " I thought " you were like the reſt of the World, and that Proſ- " perity had made you forget yourſelf and me." Then Mrs. *Veal* reminded Mrs. *Bargrave* of the many friendly Offices ſhe did her in former Days, and much of the Converſation they had with each other in the Times of their Adverſity; what Books they read, and what Comfort, in particular, they received from *Drelincourt's Book of Death*, which was the beſt, ſhe ſaid, on that Subject, ever written. She alſo mentioned Dr. *Sherlock*, the two *Dutch* Books which were tranſlated, written upon Death, and ſeveral others: But *Drelincourt*, ſhe ſaid, had the cleareſt Notions of Death, and of the future State, of any who had handled that Subject. Then ſhe aſked Mrs. *Bargrave*, Whether ſhe had *Drelincourt?* She ſaid, *Yes*. Says Mrs. *Veal*, *Fetch it*. And ſo Mrs. *Bargrave* goes up Stairs, and brings it down. Says Mrs. *Veal*, " Dear Mrs. *Bargrave*, if the Eyes of " our Faith were as open as the Eyes of our Body, " we ſhould ſee Numbers of Angels about us for " our Guard. The Notions we have of Heaven " now, are nothing like what it is, as *Drelincourt* " ſays. Therefore be comforted under your Afflic- " tions, and believe that the Almighty has a parti- " cular Regard to you, and that your Afflicti- " ons are Marks of God's Favour; and when " they have done the Buſineſs they are ſent for, " they ſhall be removed from you. And, believe " me my dear Friend, believe what I ſay to " you, one Minute of Future Happineſs will infi- " nitely reward you for all your Sufferings: For, " I can never believe (and claps her Hand upon

" her Knee with great Earneſtneſs, which indeed " ran through moſt of her Diſcourſe, that ever God " will ſuffer you to ſpend all your Days in this af- " flicted State: But be aſſured, that your Afflictions " ſhall leave you, or you them, in a ſhort Time." She ſpake in that pathetical and heavenly Manner, that Mrs. *Bargrave* wept ſeveral Times, ſhe was ſo deeply affected with it.

Then Mrs. *Veal* mentioned Dr. *Horneck's Aſcetick*, at the End of which he gives an Account of the Lives of the Primitive Chriſtians. Their Pattern ſhe recommended to our Imitation, and ſaid, " Their " Converſation was not like this of our Age: For " now (ſays ſhe) there is nothing but frothy, vain " Diſcourſe, which is far different from theirs. Theirs " was to Edification, and to build one another up in " Faith; ſo that they were not as we are, nor are we " as they were: But (ſaid ſhe) we ought to do as " they did. There was an hearty Friendſhip among " them; but where is it now to be found?" Says Mrs. *Bargrave*, *It is hard indeed to find a true Friend in theſe Days.* Says Mrs. *Veal*, Mr. *Norris* has a fine Copy of Verſes, called *Friendſhip in Perfection*, which I wonderfully admire. Have you ſeen the Book? ſays Mrs. *Veal*. *No*, ſays Mrs. *Bargrave*; *but I have the Verſes of my own writing out. Have you?* ſays Mrs. *Veal*; *then fetch them.* Which ſhe did from above Stairs, and offered them to Mrs. *Veal* to read, who refuſed, and waved the Thing, ſaying, *Holding down her head would make it ache*; and then deſired Mrs. *Bargrave* to read them to her, which ſhe did. As they were admiring Friendſhip, Mrs. *Veal* ſaid, *Dear Mrs.* Bargrave, *I ſhall love you for ever.* In theſe Verſes there is twice uſed the Word *Elyſian*. *Ah!* ſays Mrs. *Veal*, *theſe Poets have ſuch Names for Heaven!* She would often draw her Hand acroſs her own Eyes, and ſay, *Mrs.* Bargrave, *do not you think I am mightily impaired by my Fits? No*, ſays Mrs. *Bargrave, I think you look as well as ever I knew you.*

After all this Discourse, which the Apparition put in much finer Words than Mrs. *Bargrave* said she could pretend to, and as much more than she can remember (for it cannot be thought, that an Hour and three Quarters Conversation could all be retained, tho' the Main of it, she thinks she does) she said to Mrs. *Bargrave, She would have her write a Letter to her Brother, and tell him, she would have him give Rings to such and such; and that there was a Purse of Gold in her Cabinet, and that she would have two Broad Pieces given to her Cousin* Watson.

Talking at this Rate Mrs. *Bargrave* thought that a Fit was coming upon her, and so placed herself in a Chair just before her Knees, to keep her from falling to the Ground, if her Fits should occasion it; (for the Elbow-chair, she thought, would keep her from falling on either Side) and to divert Mrs. *Veal*, as she thought, took hold of her Gown-sleeve, several Times, and commended it. Mrs. *Veal* told her it was a scowered Silk, and newly made up. But for all this, Mrs. *Veal* persisted in her Request, and told Mrs. *Bargrave*, she must not deny her: And she would have her tell her Brother all their Conversation when she had Opportunity: *Dear Mrs.* Veal, says Mrs. *Bargrave, this seems so impertinent, that I cannot tell how to comply with it; and what a mortifying Story will our Conversation be to a young Gentleman? Why*, says Mrs. *Bargrave, it is much better, methinks, to do it yourself. No*, says Mrs. *Veal, tho' it seems impertinent to you now, you will see more Reason for it hereafter.* Mrs. *Bargrave* then, to satisfy her Importunity, was going to fetch a Pen and Ink; but Mrs. *Veal* said, *Let it alone now, but do it when I am gone; but you must be sure to do it:* Which was one of the last Things she enjoined her at parting; and so she promised her.

Then Mrs. *Veal* asked for Mrs. *Bargrave's* Daughter; she said, she was not at Home: But if you have a Mind to see her, says Mrs. *Bargrave*, I'll send

for her. *Do*, says Mrs. *Veal*. On which she left her, and went to a Neighbour's to see for her; and by the Time Mrs. *Bargrave* was returning, Mrs. *Veal* was got without the Door into the Street, in the Face of the Beast-market, on a *Saturday* (which is Market-day) and stood ready to part, as soon as Mrs. *Bargrave* came to her. She asked her, why she was in such Haste. She said, *she must be going, tho' perhaps she might not go her Journey till* Monday; and told Mrs. *Bargrave, she hoped she should see her again at her Cousin* Watson's *before she went whither she was going*. Then she said, *She would take her Leave of her*, and walked from Mrs. *Bargrave* in her View, till a Turning interrupted the Sight of her, which was three Quarters after One in the Afternoon.

Mrs. *Veal* died the 7th of *September*, at Twelve o'Clock at Noon, of her Fits, and had not above four Hours Senses before Death, in which Time she received the Sacrament. The next day after Mrs. *Veal's* appearing, being *Sunday*, Mrs. *Bargrave* was mightily indispos'd with a Cold, and a Sore-Throat, that she could not go out that Day; but on *Monday* Morning she sent a Person to Capt. *Watson's* to know if Mrs. *Veal* was there. They wondered at Mrs. *Bargrave's* Enquiry, and sent her Word, that she was not there, nor was expected. At this Answer Mrs. *Bargrave* told the Maid she had certainly mistook the Name, or made some Blunder. And tho' she was ill, she put on her Hood, and went herself to Capt. *Watson's*, tho' she knew none of the Family, to see if Mrs. *Veal* was there or not. They said, they wondered at her asking, for that she had not been in Town; they were sure, if she had, she would have been there. Says Mrs. *Bargrave, I am sure she was with me on* Saturday *almost two Hours*. They said, it was impossible; for they must have seen her, if she had. In comes Capt. *Watson*, while they were in Dispute, and said that Mrs. *Veal* was certainly dead, and her Escutcheons were mak-

ing. This ſtrangely ſurpriſed Mrs. *Bargrave*, when ſhe ſent to the Perſon immediately who had the Care of them, and found it true. Then ſhe related the whole Story to Capt. *Watſon's* Family, and what Gown ſhe had on, and how ſtriped; and that Mrs. *Veal* told her, it was ſcowered. Then Mrs. *Watſon* cried out, *You have ſeen her indeed, for none knew, but Mrs.* Veal *and myſelf, that the Gown was ſcowered.* And Mrs. *Watſon* owned, that ſhe deſcribed the Gown exactly: *For*, ſaid ſhe, *I helped her to make it up.* This Mrs. *Watſon* blazed all about the Town, and avouched the Demonſtration of the Truth of Mrs. *Bargrave's* ſeeing Mrs. *Veal's* Apparition. And Captain *Watſon* carried two Gentlemen immediately to Mrs. *Bargrave's* Houſe, to hear the Relation from her own Mouth. And when it ſpread ſo faſt, that Gentlemen and Perſons of Quality, the judicious and ſceptical Part of the World, flocked in upon her, it at laſt became ſuch a Taſk, that ſhe was forced to go out of the Way; for they were, in general, extremely ſatisfied of the Truth of the Thing, and plainly ſaw, that Mrs. *Bargrave* was no Hypochondriack; for ſhe always appears with ſuch a chearful Air, and pleaſing Mien, that ſhe has gained the Favour and Eſteem of all the Gentry: And it is thought a great Favour, if they can but get the Relation from her own Mouth. I ſhould have told you before, that Mrs. *Veal* told Mrs. *Bargrave*, that her Siſter and Brother-in-Law were juſt come down from *London* to ſee her. Says Mrs. *Bargrave, how came you to order Matters ſo ſtrangely? It could not be helped*, ſaid Mrs. *Veal*. And her Brother and Siſter did come to ſee her, and entered the Town of *Dover*, juſt as Mrs. *Veal* was expiring. Mrs. *Bargrave* aſked her, whether ſhe would drink ſome Tea. Says Mrs. *Veal, I do not care if I do; but I'll warrant you, this mad Fellow* (meaning Mrs. *Bargrave's* Huſband) *has broke all your Trinkets.*

Trinkets. But, says Mrs. *Bargrave*, *I'll get something to drink, for all that*; but Mrs. *Veal* waved it, and said, *It is no Matter, let it alone*; and so it passed.

All the Time I sat with Mrs. *Bargrave*, which was some Hours, she recollected fresh Sayings of Mrs. *Veal*. And one material Thing more she told Mrs. *Bargrave*, that old Mr. *Breton* allowed Mrs. *Veal* Ten Pounds a Year; which was a Secret, and unknown to Mrs. *Bargrave* till Mrs. *Veal* told it her.

Mrs. *Bargrave* never varies in her Story; which puzzles those who doubt of the Truth, or are unwilling to believe it. A Servant in the Neighbour's Yard, adjoining to Mrs. *Bargrave's* House, heard her talking to somebody an Hour of the Time Mrs. *Veal* was with her. Mrs. *Bargrave* went out to her next Neighbour's the very Moment she parted with Mrs. *Veal*, and told her what ravishing Conversation she had had with an old Friend, and told the whole of it. *Drelincourt's* Book of DEATH is, since this happened, bought up strangely. And it is to be observed, that notwithstanding all the Trouble and Fatigue Mrs. *Bargrave* has undergone upon this Account, she never took the Value of a Farthing, nor suffered her Daughter to take any Thing of any body, and therefore can have no Interest in telling the Story.

But Mr. *Veal* does what he can to stifle the Matter, and said, he would see Mrs. *Bargrave*; but yet it is certain Matter of Fact, that he has been at Captain *Watson's* since the Death of his Sister, and yet never went near Mrs. *Bargrave*; and some of his Friends, report her to be a Lyar, and that she knew of Mr. *Breton's* Ten Pounds a Year. But the Person who pretends to say so has the Reputation of a notorious Lyar, among Persons whom I know to be of undoubted Credit. Now Mr.

Veal is more of a Gentleman than to ſay ſhe lyes; but ſays, a bad Huſband has crazed her. But ſhe needs only preſent herſelf, and it will effectually confute that Pretence. Mr. *Veal* ſays, he aſked his Siſter on her Death-bed, whether ſhe had a Mind to diſpoſe of any Thing; and ſhe ſaid, *No.* Now, the Things which Mrs. *Veal's* Apparition would have diſpoſed of were ſo trifling, and nothing of Juſtice aimed at in their Diſpoſal, that the Deſign of it appears to me to be only in order to make Mrs. *Bargrave* ſo to demonſtrate the Truth of her Appearance, as to ſatisfy the World of the Reality thereof, as to what ſhe had ſeen and heard, and to ſecure her Reputation among the reaſonable and underſtanding Part of Mankind. And then again, Mr. *Veal* owns that there was a Purſe of Gold; but it was not found in her Cabinet, but in a Comb-box. This looks improbable; for that Mrs. *Watſon* owned, that Mrs. *Veal* was ſo very careful of the Key of the Cabinet, that ſhe would truſt nobody with it. And if ſo, no doubt ſhe would not truſt her Gold out of it. And Mrs. *Veal's* often drawing her hand over her Eyes, and aſking Mrs. *Bargrave* whether her Fits had not impaired her, looks to me, as if ſhe did it on purpoſe to remind Mrs. *Bargrave* of her Fits, to prepare her not to think it ſtrange, that ſhe ſhould put her upon writing to her Brother, to diſpoſe of Rings and Gold, which looks ſo much like a dying Perſon's Requeſt; and it took accordingly with Mrs. *Bargrave*, as the Effects of her Fits coming upon her; and was one of the many Inſtances of her wonderful Love to her, and Care of her, that ſhe ſhould not be affrighted; which indeed appears in her whole Management, particularly in her coming to her in the Day-time, waving the Salutation, and when ſhe was alone; and then the Manner of her parting, to prevent a ſecond Attempt to ſalute her.

Now,

Now, why Mr. *Veal* ſhould think this Relation a Reflection (as it is plain he does, by his endeavouring to ſtifle it) I cannot imagine; becauſe the Generality believe her to be a good Spirit, her Diſcourſe was ſo heavenly. Her two great Errands were to comfort Mrs. *Bargrave* in her Affliction, and to aſk her Forgiveneſs for the Breach of Friendſhip, and with a pious Diſcourſe to encourage her. So that, after all, to ſuppoſe that Mrs. *Bargrave* could hatch ſuch an Invention as this from *Friday* Noon 'till *Saturday* Noon (ſuppoſing that ſhe knew of Mrs. *Veal's* Death the very firſt Moment) without jumbling Circumſtances, and without any Intereſt too; ſhe muſt be more witty, fortunate, and wicked too, than any indifferent Perſon, I dare ſay, will allow. I aſked Mrs. *Bargrave* ſeveral Times, if ſhe was ſure ſhe felt the Gown: She anſwered modeſtly, "If my "Senſes be to be relied on, I am ſure of it." I aſked her, if ſhe heard a Sound when ſhe clapped her Hand upon her Knee: She ſaid, ſhe did not remember ſhe did; but ſaid ſhe appeared to be as much a Subſtance as I did, who talked with her. "And I may "(ſaid ſhe) be as ſoon perſuaded, that your Apparition is talking to me now, as that I did not really "ſee her: For I was under no Manner of Fear, and "received her as a Friend, and parted with her as "ſuch, I would not (ſays ſhe) give one Farthing to "make any one believe it: I have no Intereſt in it; "nothing but Trouble is entailed upon me for a long "Time, for aught I know; and had it not come to "light, by Accident, it would never have been made "publick." But now, ſhe ſays, ſhe will make her own private Uſe of it, and keep herſelf out of the Way as much as ſhe can; and ſo ſhe has done ſince. She ſays, "She had a Gentleman who came thirty "Miles to her to hear the Relation; and that ſhe "had told it to a Room full of People at a Time." Several particular Gentlemen have had the Story from Mrs. *Bargrave's* own Mouth.

This thing has very much affected me, and I am as well ſatisfied as I am of the beſt-grounded Matter of Fact. And why we ſhould diſpute Matter of Fact, becauſe we cannot ſolve Things of which we can have no certain or demonſtrative Notions, ſeems ſtrange to me. Mrs. *Eargrave's* Authority and Sincerity alone would have been undoubted in any other Caſe.

THE

THE *CHRISTIAN's* CONSOLATIONS AGAINST THE FEARS OF DEATH.

CHAP. I.

That there is nothing more dreadful than Death, to such have no hope in GOD.

AN inspired Pen styles Death very significantly, *The King of Terrors*; that is to say, the most terrible of all other Things: For there is nothing that we can imagine in the World more dreadful and more frightful than Death. It is possible to decline the Edge of drawn Swords, to close the Lion's Jaws, to quench the Fire's Fury; but when Death shoots its poisoned Arrows, when it opens its infernal Pit, and when it sends forth its devouring Flames, it is altogether impossible to secure ourselves; impossible it is to guard ourselves from its mercilefs Fury. There is an infinite Number of warlike Inventions, by which we commonly defeat the evil Designs of the most powerful and dreadful Enemies; there is no Stratagem of the most renowned General, no Fortifications ever so regular and artificial, nor Army ever so victorious, that can retard but for a Moment the Approaches of

of Death, this laſt Enemy. In the Twinkling of an Eye it flies through the ſtrongeſt Bulwarks, the deepeſt Walls, and moſt prodigious Towers. It leaps over the largeſt Ditches, the higheſt Caſtles, and the moſt inacceſſible Rocks. It blows down the ſtrongeſt barricadoes, and laughs at all our Military Trenches; every where it finds the Weakneſs of our Armour, and through the beſt-tempered Breaſt-plates it ſtrikes the proudeſt Hearts. In the darkeſt Dungeon it comes to us, and ſnatches us out of the hands of our moſt truſty and watchful Guards. In a Word, Nature and Art can furniſh us with nothing able to protect us from Death's cruel and inſatiable Hands.

There is none ſo barbarous, but is ſometimes overcome by the Prayers and Tears of ſuch as caſt themſelves upon their knees to implore Mercy; nay, ſuch as have loſt all Senſe of Humanity and Goodneſs, commonly ſpare in their Rage the weakeſt Age and Sex; but unmerciful Death hath no more Regard of ſuch as humble themſelves, than of others that reſiſt and defy it. It takes no Notice of Infants Tears and Cries; it plucks them from the Breaſts of their tender-hearted Mothers, and cruſhes them in Pieces before their Eyes. It ſcorns the Lamentations of dainty Dames, and delights to trample upon their moſt raviſhing Beauties. It ſtops its Ears to the Requeſts of trembling Old-age, and caſts to the Ground the grey Heads as ſo many withered Oaks.

At a Battle, when Princes and Generals of the Enemy's Army are taken Priſoners, they are not treated as common Soldiers; but unmerciful Death treads under Feet as audaciouſly the Prince as the Subject, the Maſter as the Servant, the Noble as the Vaſſal, the rich *Dives* and the begging *Lazarus* together. It blows out with the ſame Blaſt the moſt glorious Luminaries, and the moſt loathſome lamps. It hath no more Reſpect for the Crowns of Kings, the Pope's Mitre, and the Cardinal's Cap, than for the Shepherd's Crook, or the Slave's Chains. It heaps them together,

ther, ſhuts them in the ſame Dungeon, and in the ſame Mortar pounds them to Powder.

There is no War, tho' ever ſo furious and bloody, but it is interrupted with ſome Days, or at leaſt ſome Hours, of Ceſſation and Truce: Nay, the moſt inhuman Minds are at laſt tired with bloody Conqueſts; but inſatiable Death never ſaith, *It is enough.* At every Hour and Moment it cuts down whole Nations and Kindreds. The Fleſh of all the Animals that have lived and died ſince the Creation of the World hath not been able to glut this devouring Monſter.

All Warfare is doubtful; he that wins the Victory To-day, may ſoon after be put to flight. He that rides at preſent in a triumphant Chariot, may become the Footſtool of his Enemy. But Death is always victorious; it triumphs with an inſufferable Inſolence over all the Kings and Nations of the Earth; it never returns to its Den but loaden with Spoils, and glutted with Blood. The ſtrongeſt *Samſons*, and the moſt victorious *Davids*, who have torn in Pieces, and overcome Lions and Bears, and cut off the Heads of Giants, have at laſt yielded themſelves, and been cut off by Death. The great Alexander, and the triumphant *Cæſars*, who have made all the World to tremble before them, and conquered moſt part of the habitable Earth, could never find any thing that might protect them from Death's Power. When magnificent Statues, and ſtately Trophies, were raiſed to their Honour, Death laughed at their Vanity, and made Sport with their Perſons. The rich Marbles, where ſo many proud Titles are engraved, cover nothing but a little rotten Fleſh, and a few Bones which Death hath broken and reduced to Aſhes.

We read in the Revelation of the Prophet *Daniel*, that King *Nebuchadnezzar* ſaw in a Dream a large Statue of Gold, both glorious and terrible; *its Head was of pure Gold, its Breaſt and Arms were of Silver, its Belly and Thighs of Braſs, its Legs of Iron, and its Feet were partly of Clay, and partly of Iron.* As the Prince

Prince was beholding it with Aſtoniſhment, a little Stone cut out of a Mountain, without Hands, was rolled againſt the Feet of this prodigious Statue, and broke it all to-pieces; not only the Clay and Iron were broken, but alſo the Gold, the Silver, and the Braſs; all became as the Chaff, which the Wind blows to and fro. This great Image repreſents the Four Univerſal Monarchies of the World: That of *Babylon*, of the *Perſians* and *Medes*, of the *Greeks*, and that of the *Romans*. It repreſents alſo the Vanity and Inconſtancy of all Things under the Sun: For what is the Pomp, the Glory, the Strength and Dignities of this World, but as a Smoak driven with the Wind, and a Vapour that ſoon vaniſhes away? All is like a Shadow, that flies from us; or like a Dream, that diſappears in an Inſtant. Man, created in the Image of God, at his firſt Appearance, ſeems to be very glorious for a while, and becomes terrible: But as ſoon as Death ſtrikes at his earthly Part, and begins to break his Fleſh and Bones, all the Glory, Pomp, Power, and Magnificence of the richeſt, of the moſt terrible and victorious Monarchs, are changed into a loathſome Smell, into contemptible Duſt, and reduced to nothing; *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.*

Since therefore Death is ſo impartial as to ſpare none, and its Power ſo great that none can eſcape or reſiſt it, it is no Wonder if it is become ſo terrible, and fills with Fear, Grief, and Deſpair, the Minds of all Mortals, who have not ſettled their Faith and Aſſurance of God. For there is no condemned Priſoner but trembles when he beholds the Scaffold erecting, upon which he is deſigned to be broken upon a Wheel, or when he ſpies in the Fire Irons with which he is to be pinched to Death.

In the Midſt of a ſumptuous Feaſt, King *Belſhazzar* ſaw the Fingers of a Man's Hand writing theſe Words upon the Wall of his Palace; *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharſin*; which the Prophet *Daniel* hath thus interpreted; *Mene, God hath numbered thy Kingdom, and*

finiſhed it; *Tekel, Thou art weighed in the Balance, and art found wanting*; *Perez*, or *Upharſin, Thy Kingdom is divided, and given to the* Medes *and* Perſians. As ſoon as this great Monarch had caſt his Eyes upon this miraculous Writing, it is ſaid, that his Countenance was changed, and his Thoughts troubled him ſo that the Joints of his Loins were looſed, and his Knees ſmote one againſt another. Certainly the proud Worldling has a greater Cauſe to be diſmayed in the Midſt of his Glory and Pleaſures, when he may perceive Death writing upon every Wall of his Houſe in viſible Characters, and printing upon his Forehead, that *God hath numbered his Days*, and this in which he now breaths, ſhall be ſoon followed by an eternal Night; that *God hath weighed him in the Balance of his Juſtice and found him as light as the Wind*; and that the Almighty Creator, unto whom Vengeance belongs, will ſoon diveſt him of all his Glory and Riches, to clothe therewith his Enemies. What Comforts can be found for the wretched Sinners, who do not only underſtand their final Sentence, but alſo hear the thundering Voice of the great Judge of the World exaſperated by their Impieties? They may now perceive Hell prepared to ſwallow them up, and the fiery Chains of that doleful Priſon ready to embrace them. They may at preſent feel the Hands of the Executioner of divine Juſtice, that ſeized upon them already, and ſee themſelves before ſtretched and tortured in that Place, where there ſhall be nothing but Weeping and horrible Gnaſhing of Teeth. At preſent they may feel the fierce Approaches of that Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death; for it may be juſtly ſaid of theſe wretched Varlets, *That Hell comes to them before they go to Hell*; and that in this Life they have a Preſentiment of the grievous Pangs of their future Torments: Therefore ſome of them in Deſpair offer Violence to themſelves, and commit an horrid Murder upon their own Perſons, as if they were afraid not to die by a Hand wicked enough. The Expectation

of

of Death, to them, is more inſufferable than Death itſelf; and they had rather caſt themſelves into the bottomleſs Pit of Hell, than endure the Apprehenſions and Fears of Hell in their guilty Conſciences; and to be delivered of the Flaſhes of Hell-fire, and mount up their Souls in this Life, they caſt themſelves in a brutiſh Manner into that unquenchable Burning.

That which is moſt terrible, is, that the horrid and inſufferable Fears that ſeize upon the Wicked, are not ſhort and tranſitory; for as a Criminal, that knows there is a Sentence of Death pronounced againſt him, continually thinks upon thoſe Torments that are prepairing for him; as ſoon as he hears the Door unlocking, or a Fly buzzing at his Ears, he imagines that ſome are entering to drag him from his Priſon to Execution. In ſome Senſe, he deſires what he apprehends, and haſtens the Approaches of that which he wiſhes, but cannot avoid. Thus deſperate Sinners, that know there is a Sentence of eternal Death proclaimed againſt them in the Court of the King of Kings, and that from this Sentence there is no Appeal nor Eſcape, muſt needs be in continual Fears. Such foreſee the fearful Image of Death, that diſturbs their Quiet; and as St. *Paul* expreſſeth himſelf, *thro' Fear of Death they are all their Lifetime ſubject to Bondage*, Heb. ii. 15. That is, they are like ſo many wretched Slaves, that tremble under the inhuman Power of a mercileſs Tyrant.

I know that there be ſome *Atheiſts* who talk of Death with Contempt or Scorn, and who make an open Profeſſion of braving Death without the leaſt Senſe of Fear; nevertheleſs they feel in their Souls ſome ſecret Thorns, with which Death often gauls them; ſome Fears and Apprehenſions, with which it tortures and diſquiets them, when they dream leaſt of it. It is true, they, for the moſt part, boaſt of not fearing the Approaches of Death, and laugh at it, when they imagine that it is at a Diſtance from them; but

but theſe are they who are moſt apt to tremble at the near and grim Countenance of Death, and ſooneſt diſcover their Weakneſs and Deſpair.

If there be any that ſeem to laugh at Death, their Laughter is only an Appearance upon the Lips. They are like a Child newly born, that ſeems to ſmile, when it is inwardly tormented in the Bowels; or like thoſe that eat of the famous Herb mentioned by the Herbaliſt, which cauſes a pleaſant Laughter to appear upon the Lips of ſuch, into whoſe noble Parts it conveys a mortal Poiſon that kills them.

There be ſome, I confeſs, that die without any Concern; but theſe are either brutiſh or ſenſeleſs Perſons, much like unto a ſleeping Drunkard, who may be caſt down a Precipice, without any Knowledge or Foreſight of the Danger; or they be pleaſant Mockers, who are like the fooliſh Criminals, who go merrily to the Gallows; or they be ſuch as are full of Rage and Fury, whom I may well compare to an enraged wild Boar, that runs himſelf in the Huntſman's Snare: Such Monſters of Men deſerve not to be reckoned among rational and underſtanding Creatures.

CHAP. II.

That in all the Heathen Philoſophy *there is no ſolid and true Comfort againſt the Fears and Apprehenſions of Death.*

THERE are certain Empiricks, that ſeem at the firſt Diſcourſe to be very well ſkilled in their Art, that talk of Diſeaſes, and of their Cauſes, moſt learnedly and acutely; and nevertheleſs, in their Practice, they

they are both unhappy and ignorant. Their unſeaſonable Learning diſturbs the Patient more than their Phyſick eaſes him, and increaſes the Sufferings of the languiſhing Body. Theſe Kind of Phyſicians very well deſcribe to us, in this Particular, the Properties of the Heathen Philoſophers; for when they repreſent the Calamities of our Human Condition, they ſharpen their Wits, and diſcover all their Skill and Rhetorick. Some of them laugh ingenuouſly at our Miſeries; others artificially weep to behold them. But in all their Writings and tragic Expreſſions, we find not any ſolid and ſincere Comforts to ſtrengthen us againſt the Apprehenſions of Death.. Therefore their contemptible and vain Fancies oblige us to tell them, as *Job* his troubleſome Friends, *Your Remembrances are like unto Aſhes, your Bodies to Bodies of Clay*, Job xiii. 12. It is true ſome of thoſe learned Philoſophers have very well ſpoken, that we begin to die as ſoon as we begin to breathe; that our life is like unto a Candle that lives by its Conſumption, whereof the Flame devours and conſumes it. For the natural Heat that entertains our Life, inſenſibly undermines it; it is that which ſpends our radical Moiſture, that yields the ſame Benefits to our Life, as Oil to a Lamp or Wax to a Taper.

Others have as well ſaid, that our preſent Life is but a ſwift Race from one Mother to another. They meant from the Womb of our Mothers that brought us into the World, into the Womb and Boſom of the Earth, that will receive us at laſt; for as ſoon as we are born, we run a ſwift Race towards our Grave. At that Inſtant when we fly from Death, we approach inſenſibly towards it; and, contrary to our Intention, we caſt ourſelves into its Embraces. Some of the ſame School have compared Man to a Bubble upon the Water, that riſes and ſwells, and immediately decreaſes and breaks. Others make him like unto the wateriſh Bottles of divers Colours, that Children Blow with their Breath, and deſtroy with the ſame. In Truth, all Man's Beauty

ty is but a vain appearance, that vaniſhes away in an Inſtant, *Iſa.* xl. *All Fleſh is like Graſs, and all the Glory of Man like the Flower of the Field*, 1 Pet. i.

One of theſe great Philoſophers, being aſked what the Life of Man was, anſwered never a Word; becauſe ſuch a queſtion deſerved none, or rather becauſe he would imitate the Cuſtom of his Age, of ſpeaking by Gueſs, and ſymbolical Repreſentations. For that Purpoſe he entered into a Chamber, and paſſed out again at the ſame Inſtant, to ſignify to his Diſciples that queſtioned him, how that Man's Life is but an Entrance in, and an Egreſs out of the World; the one ſucceeds immediately the other.

Another of the ſame Sect walked in a Bravado two or three Turns, and then ſhrunk into a Pit, to ſhow that our Life is but a Kind of Maſquerade, a vain Appearance that ſoon vaniſhes: When Men have well admired themſelves in their Splendour, and have drawn to them the Looks and Eſteem of the World, Death ſurpriſes them, and ſpoils all their Luſtre, and covers their borrowed Glory in a mournful Grave. It is with us as with Actors in a Comedy; the one repreſents a King, the other an Emperor; the one a Counſellor, the other a Miniſter of State; but when the Comedy is ended, and the Garments changed, you know not which is which. We are all like Counters upon a Table; ſome ſignify Units, others Tens, others Hundreds, and others Thouſands and Millions; but when they are ſhuffled together, and put again into the Purſe, the vaſt Difference appears no more. This is a lively Image of all Mankind; for in this Life ſome appear upon a Throne, others are ſeated upon a Dunghill; ſome flouriſh in golden and ſilken Attire, others are cloathed in Nakedneſs; ſome command as Princes, others ſubmit as Galley-Slaves; ſome are fed with exquiſite Dainties, others muſt be content with the Bread of Affliction. But when Death has caſt them all into their Graves together, then they appear without any Diſtinction.

All these witty Expressions, and others of the like Nature, are pleasant and true; they teach well, and flatter the Fancy; but they afford no real Comforts. Therefore to all these learned Doctors we may say, as *Job* by the Way of Reproach to his Friends that added Sorrow to his Affliction, *You are all Physicians of no Value. How then comfort ye me in vain?* Job xiii. 9. When a Patient is afflicted with the Tortures of an unmerciful Gout, or of the Stone in the Kidneys, that force from him every Moment most grievous Sighs and Groans, if any should offer to paint before him his Looks and Grimaces, or should counterfeit them ingeniously in his Presence, he would bring him little Ease to his Torments, but rather Increase to his Vexation and Trouble. The most beautiful Flower also can give no Delight to such as are racked in the Executioner's Hand, or tied to four Horses that are ready to tear him to pieces. Thus it is with the most eloquent and florid Discourse; it can bring no Comfort to a Soul that is departing: *David's* Harp alone can drive away the evil Spirits, and appease the Troubles of a wounded Conscience.

But some may imagine, in this general Survey of the wise Follies and Vanity of the *Heathen* Philosophers, I should except the *Stoicks:* I confess, in this Particular, they express more Gravity, but they proceed with no better Success; nay, when I have well considered them, I find them to be far more insufferable and impertinent than the rest; for besides that they treat of the Immortality of the Soul in a very doubtful and inconsistent Manner, the pretended Comforts that they offer render Death more dreadful.

They tell us, that Death is the End and Centre where all human Afflictions and Miseries cease; therefore it is rather to be desired, than avoided or feared. They might have some colourable Reason for this Conclusion, if they did but discover beyond the Grave an Happiness which they might now expect and hope; for Death assures them of no other Comfort, but only

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to put a Period to all the Miſeries of this wretched Life. Therefore ſuch Kind of Diſcourſes are not properly Comforts, and the Reſolution that they beget in us, is but a ſilly Paſſion much like that of a Criminal upon the Rack, who impatiently wiſhes for Death, that he might be delivered from the cruel Hands of the Executioners; and longs to be out of theſe Torments, to get on the Scaffold where he is to be broken upon the Wheel: O miſerable Wretch! the Change of Tortures will bring no Eaſe to thy Pains. If thou canſt not endure patiently the Ropes that unjoint thy Limbs, how wilt thou ſuffer the Bar of Iron that ſhall crack all thy Bones in Pieces? O blind Philoſopher! if thou canſt not bear the Miſeries of this Life, how wilt thou endure the Agonies of Death!

Moreover they tell us, That the moſt cruel and painful Death is a noble Occaſion to exerciſe our Virtue; and to cauſe our Conſtancy and Reſolution to appear with Admiration. This Diſcourſe ſeems to be plauſible, but in Reality is nothing but Wind: For what availeth this apparent Virtue? It hinders us not from falling into the deepeſt Abyſs of Torment and Miſery; but periſhes and dies with its Idolaters: Therefore ſuch as have moſt admired it, have at laſt acknowledged it to be but a Shadow; witneſs that famous and worthy General, who fancied that his Virtue would procure him the Victory over all the Enemies of the Commonwealth, in whoſe Quarrel he took up Arms. When the Battle was loſt, and all his ambitious Hopes had deceived him, being ready to ſtab himſelf with his own Sword, he cried out, *Oh, miſerable Virtue! what art thou, but a vain unprofitable Word, a Name without a Body!* He thus exclaimed againſt his Virtue, that he had formerly adored, becauſe it could yield him no Comfort in the Day of his Diſtreſs, nor free him from falling into utter Deſpair.

The moſt ordinary and uſeful Comforts they commonly bring, are theſe: That Death is inevitable; that we all enter into the World, upon Condition to

go out; that we have as much Cauſe to be afflicted with the Day of our Birth, as with the Day of our Death; that Humanity and Immortality are not conſiſtent; that Death is a Tribute we all owe to Nature; that the Kings and greateſt Monarchs are forced to pay it, as well as the meaneſt Subjects; and that this is ſuch an univerſal Law, that it admits of no Exception.

But theſe Kinds of Comforts increaſe our Trouble, and add to our Affliction. I have therefore good Reaſon to ſpeak to theſe grave Philoſophers in *Job's* Language to his troubleſome Friends, *Miſerable Comforters are ye all:* For, in Truth, they do not only ſearch the Wound to the Quick, without any Application of an healing Plaiſter, but they alſo tear and widen it, inflame and render it far more grievous. When we are in Hopes of ſeeing an End to our Calamities, our Mind is comforted, and arms itſelf with Conſtancy, and a patient Reſolution; but when we ſee ourſelves caſt into an Abyſs of Evil, and that no Hopes appear of getting out, we are then overwhelmed with Grief and Deſpair. It is a lamentable Thing to be born to die; but it is far more lamentable and grievous to know that Death is not to be avoided, that all the Treaſures of the World cannot free us from it; for his Affliction is the greateſt whoſe Miſery cannot be cured.

This alſo is a falſe and deceitful Maxim; that the Comfort of the Miſerable is to have Companions in Miſery. Though many Thouſands drink together of the Waters of *Marah*, they ſeem no leſs bitter; and although thou ſhouldſt be burnt in a Fire where many are conſumed, thou ſhalt not find there a more eaſy Abode. Thy Neighbour's Grief does not leſſen thy Affliction; their Sickneſs cannot reſtore to thee Health, nor their Death comfort thee againſt the Approaches of thine own. On the contrary, if thou haſt any Senſe of Humanity, thou wilt weep for their Miſery and thine together. It is that which great *Xerxes*, King of *Perſia*, practiſed; for upon Review of his numerous

numerous Army, in which there were 1,700,000 Men, he conſidering that within an hundred Years ſo many brave Captains and Soldiers would be rotting in their Graves, was moved with Compaſſion, and wept. I mention not here the brutiſh and fooliſh Opinion of ſuch who imagine that Man's Soul is mortal, and periſhes with the Body. This Conſideration brings no Comfort, but brings us into an irrecoverable Deſpair; for, beſides the Torments of Hell-fire, there is nothing that can be imagined more dreadful than a Reducement to a Non-entity.

It is alſo needleſs to mention the *Platoniſts*, who have diſcourſed of the Soul's Immortality, and of its Bleſſedneſs after this Life. They imagine themſelves very acute and ſubtile; but their Diſcourſes of this Matter are ſo groſs and extravagant, that inſtead of perſuading the Truth, they expoſe it to Scorn and Contempt. Let their fond and imaginary Deſcriptions of the *Elyſian* Fields be Witneſſes; for whatſoever they have invented of this Kind hath been reckoned among the Fables and poetical Fictions. Thoſe chimerical Gardens and Ground contain nothing like to the Divine Excellencies, and unſpeakable Pleaſures of the Paradiſe of God.

In a Word, ſeek amongſt the rareſt and moſt precious Treaſures of Wit and Learning of the *Heathen* Antiquity; turn over the Writings of the moſt eloquent Orators, of the ſubtileſt Philoſophers, of the moſt famous Poets; examine the Secrets of the moſt experienced Phyſicians, conſider their Practice, and all the Remedies they preſcribe to the Soul, and you ſhall find them too unſkilful to perform the leaſt Cure. They do but charm and flatter the Diſeaſe; they harden us againſt Evil; they furniſh us with a good Exterior, and teach us to bear a good Mien; but they have no real Antidote againſt the Venom that kills the Principle of Life; nor the Remedy that reaches to the Heart: And as Torrents, that dry up in the hotteſt Seaſons, ſuch Conſolations that flow

not from the Fountain of Life, vaniſh away without Effect, and dry up to nothing, when a deep Sorrow, Fear and Affliction, ſeize upon a ſinful Soul.

It ſeems the Compilers of the Heathen Religion were ſenſible of this Truth; for they dedicated Temples, and erected Altars, to all Manner of Gods and Goddeſſes; not only to Virtues and Health, but alſo to Vices and Diſeaſes, to Fear, Cowardice, Anger, the Fever, the Peſtilence, and an infinite Number more; but they left Death out of their Devotions. This is an open Declaration, that they knew not how to ſtrike Acquaintance with Death, and win its Eſteem and Favour. They had no Sacrifice nor Incenſe that could allay its Fury; they looked upon it as their moſt inhuman and irreconcileable Enemy. The very Name of Death terrified them; therefore it was one of their moſt unfortunate *Omens*. *Adrian*, the Emperor, is witneſs of what I ſay: He was one of the greateſt Princes in former Ages; he made moſt Part of the inhabitable World yield to his Sceptre, and put to Death an infinite Number of Men; but at laſt he trembled, and was aſtoniſhed himſelf at the Approaches of Death: He had overcome the moſt barbarous Nations, and tamed the moſt ſavage Beaſts; but when he came to this laſt Enemy, he had no Weapon fit for the Encounter. Therefore, on this Occaſion, he diſcovers the Weakneſs and Inconſtancy of his Mind, far more diſturbed than his Body was with the Diſeaſe. Sometimes he employed the magick Art to retard Death; ſometimes he made uſe of his Sword and Poiſon to haſten it; at laſt he killed himſelf by an Abſtinence from Food, neceſſary to entertain his Life. He had conquered all the World, and given Peace and Happineſs to his Empire; but he could not overcome himſelf, or appeaſe the Troubles of his Conſcience. He was ſo far from quieting the diſturbed Thoughts of his Soul, that he ſuffered himſelf to be overwhelmed with Deſpair; he flattered his Soul in haſtening its Ruin; for when his Diſeaſe gave him Liberty to breathe, he talked

talked unto it in this Manner: *My little Soul, my deareſt Companion, thou art now going to wander in obſcure, cold, and ſtrange Places: Thou ſhalt never jeſt again according to thy wonted Manner; thou ſhalt never give me any more Sport or Pleaſure.*

You will ſay, *Adrian*, was a powerful Monarch, but no great Philoſopher; perhaps he knew how to govern, and was well acquainted with the Politicks; but he was ignorant of the Morals, and had no Skill to die well. To anſwer this Objection, let us give an Example beyond all Exception.

Ariſtotle is generally eſteemed to have been the ſubtileſt, and the moſt learned of the Heathen Antiquity, the Prince of all the Philoſophers, the Glory of his Age, and the Founder of his Sect: When his excellent Soul had ſurveyed all Things, examined the Heavens, ſearched among the Excellencies of the Earth, pried into all the Wonders of the World, and found out the rareſt Secrets of Nature, he could never find any ſolid Comfort againſt the Apprehenſions of Death. Notwithſtanding all his admirable Subtilties, and his profound Learning, the Fear of this cruel Death terrifies his Conſcience in ſuch a Manner, that he confeſſed, *That of all terrible Things Death was the moſt dreadful.*

CHAP. III.

Of divers Sorts of Death, with which we are to encounter.

WHEN *David* had a Deſign to fight with *Goliath*, and could not make uſe of the Armour of King *Saul*, he took a ſmooth Stone out of his Bag, caſt it with his Sling, ſtruck the *Philiſtine* in the Forehead, and brought down this proud Giant, who had defied the Armies of *Iſrael*. We have already exa-

mined and tried all the Armour of human Wisdom and Learning, laid up in the Store-houses of the greatest Wits of former Ages; and we have found that they are not able to afford us any Assistance in an Encounter with Death. Let us, therefore, now see whether we may overcome this proud Enemy with the Sling of our mystical *David*, with the Weapons of our Divine Shepherd: But, before we begin the Resistance, let us look and behold it in the Face. The Enemy I intend you shall overcome, is a Monster with three Heads; for there are three Sorts of Death, the Natural, the Spiritual, and the Eternal.

The Natural Death is a Separation of the Soul from the Body. Although our Body hath been fashioned with the Finger of God, it is but a weak and frail Vessel, made of Earth: But our Soul is an heavenly, spiritual, and immortal Substance; it is a Sparkle and a Ray of the Godhead, and the lively Image of our Great Creator: For when God had made our first Parent, *he breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life*, Gen. ii. 7. that we might thereby understand, that our Souls alone proceeded from his immediate Hand; therefore he is named the *Father of Spirits*, Heb. xii. and *the faithful Creator of Souls*, 1 Pet. iv. This Soul raises us a Degree above all Animals, and above the celestial Bodies, and renders us like the Angels of Heaven. It is the Light that enlightens us, the Salt that preserves us from Corruption. In one Word, by this Soul we live, enjoy our Senses, move and understand. As soon as this Angelical Guest leaves its Mansion the Body, it loseth all its Beauty, and falls of itself into a State of Ruin; for this Flesh that we are so careful of, and feed with all Manner of Dainties, then corrupts and rots. After that it hath been stretched awhile upon Beds of Gold, and richly attired in Purple and Scarlet, it is cast upon a Bed of Worms, and covered with the vilest Insects of the Earth. Notwithstanding all its former Perfumes, it

yields

yields then a moſt horrid Stink. Before, it raviſhed the Eyes of the Beholders with its admirable Beauty; but now it becomes ſo odious and offenſive, that the Living care not to ſee it. It is at laſt reduced to Aſhes, according to the Sentence that was pronounced in the earthly Paradiſe, *Duſt thou art, and unto Duſt thou ſhalt return.*

The Spiritual Death is the Separation of the Soul from God our Creator; for he being the Soul of our Souls, and the Light of our Life, we fall into an Abyſs of Darkneſs and Death: *For all thoſe that depart from God ſhall periſh*, Pſal. lxxiii. As the Members, when they are cut off from the Body, commonly rot; as the Twig withers, when it is ſeparated from the Vine; ſo, in a Separation from God, we can neither live, move, nor have a Being. And as it is with the Body ſeparated from the Soul, it nouriſhes a Neſt of Worms that devour it, and ſends forth a moſt inſufferable Stench; ſo it is with our Souls at a Diſtance from God: It yields thoſe evil Affections that torment and conſume it; and the ill Scent of its Crimes is offenſive to Heaven and Earth. Of this Kind of Death our Saviour ſpeaks to the *Jews* in this Manner: *If you do not believe that I am he, you ſhall die in your Sins*, John viii. And to the Angel of the Church at *Sardis*, *Thou haſt a Name that thou liveſt, and art Dead*, Rev. iii. The ſame Death St. *Paul* mentions in the ſecond Chapter of the *Coloſſians*, and the ſecond of the *Epheſians*; *When we were dead in our Treſpaſſes and Sins, God hath quickened us together with Chriſt.* And elſewhere he exhorts a ſinful Man, *Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the Dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light*, Eph. v. And it is of the ſame Kind of Death that St. *Paul* ſpeaks concerning the wanton Widow, that *ſhe is dead while ſhe liveth*, 1 Tim. v.

It was this Kind of Death that *Adam* ſuffered as ſoon as he had taſted of the forbidden Fruit, according to God's Threatning; *In the Day that thou eateſt thereof*

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thou ſhalt die the Death. For not only his Body became ſubject to Death, but his Soul was alſo caſt into the Death of Sin, and enſlaved to Corruption. It happened to him as to a Lamp newly put out; the Snuff yields a moſt ill-ſavoured ſcent.

As the Life of Grace is a Preparative to the Life of Glory, and furniſhes us with the Fore-taſte of the heavenly Joys; ſo, on the contrary, the carnal Life is as it were the Suburbs of Hell; it is the firſt Beginning of an eternal Death, and the Entrance into the infernal Pit. The eternal Death is nothing elſe but an entire and irrecoverable Separation of the Soul and Body from GOD, accompanied with infinite Torments; Torments, indeed, unto which all the Sufferings of this mortal Life are light and inconſiderable: Nevertheleſs, as the Spirit of God repreſents the heavenly Joys and Felicities by Things that are moſt pleaſant and delightful; ſo, to expreſs to us Hell-Torments, it borrows Things that are the moſt dreadful and painful in this Life: We are told of an *Abyſs* or *Furnace full of Flames, a bottomleſs Pit burning with Fire and Brimſtone.* The Scripture mentions *Chains of Darkneſs*, an *eternal Night*, and an *Hell-fire, where there are Weeping and Gnaſhing of Teeth.* It tells us, *That* Tophet *is ordained of old, yea, for the King it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large: The Pile thereof is Fire, and much Wood; the Breath of the* LORD, *like a Stream of Brimſtone, doth kindle it,* Iſaiah xxx. 33.

Fancy to yourſelves a Man devoured with Worms, burning in hot Flames, in continual Torments, in whoſe Wounds kindled Brimſtone is poured without Intermiſſion, with boiling Lead, and burning Pitch; if there be any other Pains more ſharp and grievous, fancy them alſo. All this will give us but a light and imperfect Image of the State of Hell; for all the Pangs of the Body are nothing in Compariſon to the Horrors, Troubles, and incredible Griefs, that ſhall for ever rack and torture the damned Souls.

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As Shame aggravates our Sufferings, and renders them more terrible, the Damned ſhall be loaded with Shame and Infamy to all Eternity; their Names ſhall be hateful to GOD and his holy Angels, and they ſhall be curſed with an endleſs Curſe. And as it is an Increaſe to our Torment to ſuffer in the Company of abominable Varlets, and to become a Companion of the moſt infamous Raſcals; they ſhall ſuffer with Hell's Executioner, and ſhall be ſent to the Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. All their Senſes ſhall ſhare in theſe horrid Torments; they ſhall be cruſhed in the *Wine Preſs* of God's eternal Wrath, and they ſhall feel for ever and ever the Strokes of God's Vengeance, and of his almighty Hand. They ſhall then learn, by Experience, what a terrible Thing it is to fall into the Hands of the living God, and how inſufferable that Fire is, that ſhall conſume his Enemies. Their Eyes ſhall perceive nothing but the bottomleſs Pit, the Devil's Image, and the Furies of Hell; their Ears ſhall hear nothing but the horrible Outcries, and fearful Roarings, of tormented Devils and damned Souls. They ſhall be choaked with the noiſome Smell and Fumes of the bottomleſs Pit; they ſhall then drink the very Dregs and Bottom of GOD's Anger and Indignation, and they ſhall ſuck the Venom of his Arrows; *Fire and Brimſtone ſhall be the Portion of their Cup.*

The Sufferings of this Life are but ſhort, and for a Moment; but the Torments of the Damned ſhall never end; *Their Worm dieth not, and their Fire ſhall never be quenched*, Mark ix. Rev. xx. They ſhall be tormented Day and Night to all Eternity. When they ſhall have ſuffered as many thouſand Ages, as there be Drops of Water in the Sea, or Grains of Sand on the Shore, it ſhall be but the Beginning of their Grief. They ſhall live for ever, to die continually; and they ſhall die, and never be conſumed. In the Midſt of theſe hot Flames, they ſhall beg a Drop of Water to cool their Tongue, *Luke* xvi. but we may

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ſay of the Fire that ſhall torture the Damned, what the Spouſe in the *Canticles* ſaith of the Divine Love that had inflamed her Soul; *Many Waters cannot quench it, neither can the Floods drown it*, Cant. viii. And St. *Paul* tells us, *That the Things that God hath prepared for them that love him, Eye hath not ſeen, Ear hath not heard, nor did it ever enter into the Heart of Man*, 1 Cor. ii. So, on the contrary, we may ſay, that thoſe Things that God hath prepared for them that hate him, *Eye hath not ſeen, Ear hath not heard, nor did it ever enter into the heart of Man.* From hence ſhall proceed their Rage, Madneſs, and Deſpair; they ſhall cry in *Cain's* Language, *My Puniſhment is greater than I can bear*, Gen. iv. When they ſhall ſee nothing but an extreme Miſery and woful Darkneſs, they ſhall curſe God the King of all Creatures, *Iſa.* viii. In their Fury and Rage they will eat their Tongues, and blaſpheme the Great God of Heaven and Earth. It had been far better for ſuch Perſons, that they had never been born; therefore they ſhall ſeek Death and ſhall not find it, *Matt.* xxvi. They ſhall deſire to die, that is, to be reduced to nothing, *Rev.* ix. but this Death ſhall fly from them: Who of you can dwell in eternal Flames? *Rev.* vi. If the Phials and little Cups full of God's Wrath force the Wicked to cry out, how much more ſhall the Rivers and the Ocean of God's Vengeance draw from them, *O Mountains, fall on us; O Rocks, cover us, and hide us from the Face of him that ſits upon the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb; for the Day of his Wrath is come, and who may abide it?* But as they have ſtopped their Ears to God's gracious Calls, and hardened their Hearts to his Invitation to Repentance, God ſhall alſo ſtop his Ear to their Out-cries, and his Eyes to their grievous Sufferings; and when they ſhall be overcome with Fear and Deſpair, God will ſcorn and mock at their inſufferable Miſery.

CHAP.

CHAP IV.

That Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord hath redeemed us from eternal Death, and, by Degrees, reſcues us from a Spiritual Death.*

WE read in the fifth Chapter of the *Revelations* of St. *John*, that he wept bitterly, becauſe no Being in Heaven and Earth nor under the Earth was able to open the Book ſealed with ſeven Seals, that was in God's Right-Hand. At that Inſtant one of the twenty-four Elders ſpake to him, *Weep not; behold the Lion of the Tribe of* Judah *hath prevailed to open the Book, and to looſe the ſeven Seals.* Thus we have until now wept bitterly becauſe we could find nobody in the Armies of *Iſrael* to encounter with that powerful Monſter Death. But let us alſo wipe our Tears, and take good Courage, my Beloved; for this ſame Lion of the Tribe of *Judah* is appointed to fight with this dreadful Enemy: Our victorious and triumphing *David*, who had torn in Pieces the infernal Lion, bruiſed the ancient Serpent's Head, and *ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, triumphing over them in his Croſs*, Col. ii. 15. It is he that hath undertaken this glorious Combat; it was for that Purpoſe that he left for a while the Throne of God the Father, and the Company of his holy Angles, 1 *Sam.* xvii. It was for that Intent that he came into the Camp and Confuſion of *Iſrael*. He hath not borrowed the Weapons and Aſſiſtance of the World, *Heb.* ii. All that he hath taken from us, is our frail Nature. But *he hath armed himſelf with Righteouſneſs, as with a Breaſt-plate, and hath put on the Helmet of Salvation. He hath cloathed himſelf with Vengeance as with a Cloak; he hath trodden the Wine-preſs and nobody hath aſſiſted him*, Iſa. lix. lxiii. But his arm hath ſaved him, and his Hand hath upheld him; as *David* cut off *Goliath's* Head with his own Sword, *Jeſus Chriſt* hath overcome Death by Death. Like unto the ſtrong *Samſon*, he hath deſtroyed all the Enemies of his Glory by his Death, 1 *Sam.* xvii.

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He hath overcome, in dying, him who had the Empire of Death, that is, the Devil, *Heb.* ii. and hath delivered them, *who through Fear of Death were all their Life-time subject to Bondage.* Then was fulfilled this Saying of *Hosea*, *O Death, I will be thy Plague; O Grave, I will be thy Destruction*, Hos. xiii. And that of *Isaiah*, *He will swallow up Death in Victory, and the Lord God will wipe away Tears from off all Faces, and the Rebuke of his People shall be taken away from all the Earth*, Isa. xxv. 1 Tim. vi. This blessed Prince, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only hath Immortality, and dwelleth in inaccessible Light, hath destroyed Death, and brought to Light Life and Immortality by the Gospel, 1 *Tim.* i. *O Death where is thy Sting; O Grave, where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; but Thanks be to God who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor. xv.

This great God and Saviour has perfectly redeemed us from eternal Death, as he himself teaches us in the Gospel of St. *John*; *he that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation, but is passed from Death unto Life*, Ch. v. 24. *I am the living Bread, which came down from Heaven; if any Man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever*, Ch. vi. 51. Ver. 40. *Your Fathers did eat Manna in the Wilderness, and are dead; this is the Bread which cometh down from Heaven, that a Man may eat thereof, and not die*, Chap. viii. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a Man keep my Word, he shall never taste of Death. I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die; and he that believeth in me although he were dead yet shall he live*, Ch. xi. *The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is eternal Life through our Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed and holy is he that hath Part in the first Resurrection*, Rev. xx. *The second Death shall never have any Power upon him.* In a Word, the Gates of Hell, that is to say, Death cannot prejudice them who are settled upon *Jesus Christ*,

the Rock of Eternity. This merciful Saviour hath alſo delivered us from the Spiritual Death, *Eph.* ii. For we being dead in our Treſpaſſes and Sins, he hath quickened us, and raiſed us up together unto Newneſs of Life, *Col.* ii. He hath carried our Sins in his Body upon the Croſs, that, he dying unto Sin, we might live unto Righteouſneſs. We are buried with him in his Death by Baptiſm, that as *Jeſus Chriſt* is raiſed from the Dead by the Glory of God the Father, we alſo ſhould walk in Newneſs of Life, 1 *Pet.* ii. *Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, and riſe from the Dead, and Jeſus Chriſt ſhall enlighten thee,* Eph. v. For by his Death he hath not only reconciled us to God the Father, *Rom.* vi. *Col.* i. but he hath alſo procured to us the Holy Spirit that creates in us a new Heart, and imprints the Image of his Holineſs, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 2 *Cor.* v. He makes us become new Creatures, and regenerates us by the uncorruptible Seed, 1 *Pet.* i. This is that which the Scripture names the firſt Reſurrection, *Rev.* xx. St. *Peter* was raviſhed in Admiration at this great and wonderful Benefit, and therefore he acknowledged it; *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the Dead,* 1 *Pet.* i. God diſcovered to the Prophet *Ezekiel* a Field covered with dry Bones, and commanded him to propheſy upon theſe Bones, *Ezek.* xxxvii. At the Prophet's Command they began to draw near to one another; then the Nerves began to appear, the Fleſh to grow, and to be covered with Skin; but there was no Life, till God commanded the Prophet to propheſy again, *Thus ſaith the Lord, Spirit, come from the four Winds, blow upon theſe dead Bodies, and let them riſe from the Dead.* Then the Spirit entered into them, they began to revive, and they ſtood upon their Legs. This is the lively and true Image of the firſt Reſurrection; for the Spirit of God, that blows whither it liſteth, regenerates us by Degrees, *Job* iii. and the

new

new Man is created in our Hearts by little and little as the Child grows in the Mother's Womb.

When *Joſhua* brought the Children of *Iſrael* into the Land of Promiſe, he deſtroyed not all the *Canaanites*, Joſh. xxiii. there remained ſome who became Scourges in their Sides, and Thorns in their Eyes. Thus our true and ſpiritual *Joſhua*, who hath let us into the Kingdom of his Grace, hath not altogether deſtroyed all our evil Affections; ſome yet remain, that are like Prickles in our Sides, and like Swords that pierce thro' our Souls. They yet render our Life bitter and unpleaſant; therefore we often deſire Death to come and put a Period to this Conflict. Sin was in Poſſeſſion of us, as a ſtrong Man armed in an Houſe; but *Jeſus Chriſt* is entered into our Souls, and become Maſter; he hath therefore bound and chained Sin, and hath nailed it to his Croſs. But this furious Beaſt, tho' he hath received a mortal Wound, and is ready to give up the laſt Gaſp, yet ſtruggles and foams within us. Our bleſſed Saviour hath extinguiſhed with the real Stream of his Blood, the infernal Flames of our curſed Affections; but yet there remain in the Aſhes ſome Sparkles of this deviliſh Fire, that yet cauſe in us feveriſh Fits. Only this merciful Redeemer, of his infinite Goodneſs, hath looſed us from the Devil's Chains; but that we might have Cauſe to be humble, to deſire the Increaſe of Grace, and long for the Arrival of his Glory, he leaves about us ſome of the troubleſome Fetters: By his holy Spirit he files them off by Degrees; but one Day he will take them away from us.

At the Voice of this Prince of Life, that reaches to the very Bottom of our Hearts, we are riſen from the Sepulchre of our Vices with our Grave-clothes about us, as *Lazarus* when he came out of his Tomb. We are like the ancient Slaves who were ſet at Liberty; we bear upon our Foreheads the viſible Marks of our ancient Bondage; but one Day our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* ſhall cover theſe Marks of Infamy and Diſgrace with an

an heavenly Diadem. If you deſire another Image of our ſpiritual Condition, fancy to yourſelves a dead Man caſt into a foul Pit or Sink, unto whom Life is reſtored in a Moment; afterwards, by Degrees, he is waſhed and cleanſed of that Filth that covered his Body. We were not only dead of a ſpiritual Death, but we were alſo overwhelmed in an Abyſs of Corruption and Filth. The Son of God hath pulled us out of this Abyſs, and already reſtored us to Life; but the Dirt and Putrefaction with which we are disfigured, he waſhes away with the Water of Grace, *Zech.* xiii. *For there is a Fountain open for Sin in the Houſe of* David, *Iſa.* iv. in the which God hath promiſed to waſh away all the Filth of the Daughter of *Sion*, and all the Blood of *Jeruſalem*. And as it happened to the cruel King *Adonibezek*, when the Tribe of Judah took him Priſoner, he loſt the Thumbs of his Hands and the great Toes of his Feet, but he ſuffered not Death till he came to *Jeruſalem*; thus our great God and Saviour, the Prince of the Tribe of *Judah*, hath cut off the Strength and Power of the Old Man, who tyrannized in our Souls, and hath deprived him of his venomous Nails, with which he wounded our Hearts; he hath alſo given him a Mortal Wound, but he ſuffers him to enjoy a languiſhing Life, and will not take away his laſt Breath, until we bring him to the Gates of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*.

But to ſpeak more openly; Sin is yet in us, but it reigneth not: For our Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt* hath broken its Sceptre, and pulled it from the Throne; and as he hath taken from it all Command in us, he conſtrains it to leave the Poſſeſſion of our Souls by Degrees. As a ſtrong and mighty King, who, having won the Battle, purſues and drives the Enemy, until he hath totally expelled them out of his Kingdom; ſo doth our Saviour deal with Sin.

And as it happens to a Woman with Child in her old Age, there are in her Body two contrary Lives, that of the Mother and that of the Child, the one

decays and dies inſenſibly, the Child's Life grows and increaſeth by Degrees; ſo it is in the faithful and regenerate Soul; there are two Lives, that of *Sin*, that the Scripture names the *old Man*; and that of the new Man, which is created according to God in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs; the one diminiſhes and draws to its final End; but the other grows, and gathers Strength, until we arrive to the perfect Stature of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*; the Spirit of God every Day gets Ground of our Corruption and Weakneſs.

CHAP. V.

Why we are yet ſubjected to the Corporal or Natural Death, and what Advantage we thereby receive in Jeſus Chriſt.

THE wiſe King teacheth us in the Ninth of *Eccleſiaſtes*, That *the ſame Accident happens to all, to the Righteous, and to the Wicked, to the Clean, and to the Polluted, to him that ſacrificeth, and to him that ſacrificeth not.* Theſe Words are to be underſtood of the ſeveral Afflictions unto which we are expoſed during this mortal Life; but we may apply it to the Natural Death: For *it is appointed unto all Men once to die, and after that Judgment follows*, Heb. ix. By one Man Sin is entered into the World, and by Sin Death; and thus Death is come upon all Men becauſe they have all ſinned, *Rom.* v. Therefore, when *Joſhua* felt himſelf feeble and decaying, he told the Children of *Iſrael*, *That he was going the way of all Fleſh*, Joſh. xxiii. And *Job* complains unto God, *I know that thou wilt reduce me to Death, and to the Houſe appointed for all Living*, Job xx. It was upon this Subject that the Royal Prophet was exerciſing his Meditation, when he cried out, *Who is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee Death? Shall he free his Soul from the Power of the Grave?* Pſ. lxxxix. And to ſpeak the Language of *Solomon*, *Or ever the ſilver*

ſilver Cord be looſed, or the golden Bowl broken, or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain, or the Wheel be broken at the Ciſtern: That is to ſay, the Back-bone, where Marrow is as white as Silver, be looſed; when the Skull, which is like a precious Veſſel of Gold, be broken; when the *Vena Cava* receives no more Blood from the Liver, the Fountain of Life; when the Lights, which draw in and puſh forth the Breath, move no more; or when the Kidneys, which extract the Humidity from the Veins, and cauſe it to drop down into the Bladder, as into a Ciſtern, begin to fail; *Then ſhall the Body return to the Earth, as it was, and the Spirit ſhall return unto God that gave it.*

To expreſs to us this inevitable Fate, *Moſes* reckons all the ancient Fathers, who have lived longeſt in the firſt World; he mentions one who lived 700, others 800, others 809 Years, and ſome near 1000, *Gen.* v. But when he had well ſpoken of their Deeds, and of their Children which they left behind, he adds, in the Concluſion of all, and then ſuch an one died. Thus our Creator executes upon all Men the Sentence once pronounced againſt *Adam*, the Father of all Mankind, *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return.*

By this Means God declared his Juſtice and Truth, and accompliſhed what was ſignified by the ancient Types, *Lev.* xiv. For according to the Laws which God gave to *Iſrael* by *Moſes*, the Houſe that was infected with *Leproſy*, was to be demoliſhed, and caſt into a noiſome Place. There is a more urgent Cauſe for a Man's Body to be deſtroyed, and laid in the Sepulchre, becauſe he was created to be the Palace of the living God, the Dwelling of his Glory; but *Sin*, a Kind of infectious *Leproſy*, hath inſinuated itſelf, and disfigur'd it, hath entered the Skin, corrupted the blood, diſordered the Spirits, crept into the Joints and Marrow, and hath ſpread its Venom in ſuch a manner, that there is none of our Members but is an Inſtrument of Iniquity and Unrighteouſneſs, *Rom.* vi. For the ſame Reaſon, we cannot ſufficiently admire the

Difference which God hath put between the Veſſels that were clean, and ſuch as were unclean; for he commanded, that the earthen Veſſels infected ſhould be broken in Pieces, *Lev.* xi. but that ſuch as were of a more valuable Subſtance ſhould be only waſhed with Water, and purified with Fire, *Numb.* xi. The Commands and Laws of the great God are excellent Commentaries upon his Actions. Our Soul is like a golden Veſſel, becauſe it is a Spiritual and heavenly Subſtance, therefore God doth not altogether deſtroy it, although it be infected with Sin; but cauſed it to be waſhed and cleanſed at the Fountain of his infinite Mercy. He purifies it with the Blood of his Son, and cauſes it to paſs through the Fire of his holy Spirit. But for this miſerable Body and earthly Veſſel and Tabernacle, he breaks it to Pieces, and reduces it to Duſt and Aſhes. It is my Judgment, that Death is an excellent Means to demonſtrate the infinite Power of our great God and Saviour: For the greater the Diſeaſe is, the more admirable is the Cure. Without doubt, the Finger of God, in his infinite Power, is far more viſible in raiſing one Man from the Dead, than preſerving many Thouſands alive.

As God is wont to lighten our Darkneſs, ſo he makes uſe of Death, to cauſe his infinite Wiſdom to ſhine and appear in all his Creatures. Sin hath brought forth Death, and Death, on the contrary, as a moſt fortunate Parricide, kills and deſtroys its Parent, Sin: For it is Death that totally roots out of our Souls all corrupt Affections.

Moreover, God, who is the ſame Yeſterday, To-day, and for ever, *Heb.* xiii. will have all his Children paſs through the ſame Path, to take Poſſeſſion of his eternal Inheritance, and enter by the ſame Gate into his royal Palace. All the Faithful in the *Old Teſtament* are gone already this Way, *through many Tribulations*, Acts xxiv. They are arrived to the Kingdom of God, and through Death they are come to the Abode of Life and Immortality. The Holy Scriptures, that are inſpired of God,

God, tell us, That the Reubenites, *and half the Tribe of* Manaſſes, *Numb.* xxxii. *Joſh.* i. left their Dwellings which they had beyond *Jordan*, to go over and fight in the Army of *Iſrael*, and did not offer to return, until God had given Reſt to their Brethren, and put them into a peaceable Poſſeſſion of their Inheritances. If I may make ſome Stop at ſuch an elegant Allegory, I may ſay, that theſe Paſſages repreſent to us a lively Figure of the Faithful who die before the End of the World: For they leave their Bodies, the Abode and Dwelling of their Souls, and paſs through Death, as through another *Jordan*, into the celeſtial *Canaan*, to encounter with God by their Prayers, in the Society of the Firſt-born, whoſe Names are regiſtered in Heaven, and they will not return again to their Bodies, until the Number of the Saints be complete, until the Building of the Church be finiſhed, and until our great *Joſhua* hath introduced us into his eternal Reſt, and put us in Poſſeſſion of the incorruptible Inheritances reſerved for us in Heaven. Then we ſhall not need to fight, but to enjoy peaceably the Fruits of our Victories, and to reſt for ever from our Labours. We ſhall have no Cauſe to offer to God Prayers and Supplications; but our Buſineſs ſhall be to ſing unto him Praiſes, and eternal Thankſgivings.

The more conſiderable Reaſon, in my Judgment, of this our Deſtiny, is, That God has predeſtinated us to be conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the Firſt-born among many Brethren; he will have us to be baptized with his Baptiſm, and drink in his Cup, and enter into Bliſs by the ſame Gate, through which he hath already paſſed. Through Shame and Diſgrace he is arrived to Glory; and through Death he is entered into Life. He hath drunk of the Bitter Waters, before he taſted of the River of celeſtial Joys; and he went down into the Grave before he would mount up to the Right-Hand of God.

Although it is appointed unto all Men once to die, *Heb.* ix. I dare affirm, that Death has no cauſe to

triumph, becauſe the chief Advantage is not on that Side. We read in the Book of *Eſther*, that King *Ahaſuerus* would not recall the Proclamation that he had ſent forth againſt the *Jews*, but he gave them full Liberty to take up Arms to defend themſelves, to attack their Enemies, and to make them ſuffer all the Miſchief they intended againſt them. I find ſomething like unto this Proceeding, for God would not call back the Sentence of Death pronounced againſt Mankind in the Garden of *Eden*; nevertheleſs he allows us, nay he commands his true *Iſrael*, to take up Arms againſt Death, to conquer and trample it under Feet.

In the firſt Place *Jeſus Chriſt*, our Head, hath encountered with Death and overcome it; he hath purſued it unto its Trenches, and baffled it in its own Fortification; Death thought to have devoured him, but it hath been devoured itſelf. As the Fiſhes are taken by the Hook that they think to ſwallow; and as the Bees hurt thoſe whom they ſting, but do greater Harm to themſelves; for they break their Stings, and loſe thereby their Lives: Thus Death, by fixing its Sting in the Humanity of *Jeſus Chriſt*, hath put him to a great deal of Pain for a Time, but it hath thereby loſt all Strength and Vigour for ever.

The Men of *Judah*, to ſatisfy the enraged *Philiſtines*, delivered into their Hands *Samſon* bound with Ropes. When they ſaw him, they gave ſeveral joyful Shouts; but the Spirit of God came upon him in ſuch a manner, that he tore in Pieces the two Ropes wherewith he was bound, and overcame them by whom he was to be led away Priſoner, and killed a Thouſand of them. Thus the miſerable *Jews*, for fear of the *Romans*, delivered unto them our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, their Brother, according to the Fleſh, bound like a Malefactor. When Hell ſaw him nailed to the Croſs, and afterwards laid in the Grave, it did wonderfully rejoice the Devil, and his Angels began to ſing Songs of Triumph. But it was altogether impoſſible, that the Prince of Life

ſhould

ſhould be detained in the Priſons of Death. He hath not only broken out of the Grave by his infinite Power, but hath alſo trampled under Feet all his moſt furious Enemies, and overcome Millions of infernal Fiends. And to declare how Life and Death were in his Power, he baffled Death, when he was, as it were, a Priſoner, ſhut up in his Dungeon. He hath broken open the Gates of this black Priſon, and torn in Pieces all his Fetters: For when he was yet in the Grave, he raiſed to Life many that were Dead, who were ſeen in the holy City; and yet at preſent he holds in his Hand the Keys of Death and of Hell. Therefore, as Children rejoice at their Father's Victory, and as the Subjects are concerned at the proſperous Proceeding of their King, and as the Members are the better for the Glory and Honour of their Head; thus we may juſtly glory in the moſt notable Victories and famous Triumphs of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is our Father, King, and Head. We may alſo juſtly glory, that we are Lords of Death, and that we have overcome it in the Perſon of our great God and Saviour. I ſay this after the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, *That God hath quickened us together, and raiſed us together, and made us ſit together in heavenly Places with Jeſus Chriſt*, Eph. ii.

Moreover as our Saviour hath once overcome Death for us, he continues to ſubdue it in and by us. He ſuffers us not to encounter with our Enemies alone, nor leaves us in our Agonies: But as, in a Day of Battle, a wiſe and provident General hath an Eye to every Place, and encourages, by his Action and Voice, his Soldiers, whom he perceives at Handy-Blows with the Enemy; ſome he loads with Praiſes, others with Promiſes; by that Means he encourageth ſuch as behave themſelves bravely, reſcues the Weak and Feeble, and to ſuch as are overborne, he furniſhes them with freſh Supplies: Thus deals with us our Lord and Saviour, *Jeſus Chriſt*, the great God of Hoſts, who ſits in the Heavens in Triumph, and beholds all our

Combats and Encounters. When he perceives us too weak, that we might not be overcome by our dreadful Enemies, he furniſhes us with his Holy Spirit, and his own Armour, as *Jonathan* did *David*, when he delivered to him his Cloak, his Bow, his Belt, and Sword. Beſides this merciful Saviour diſarms Death of its moſt hurtful Weapons, and takes away all its Arrows and Darts.

As the Strength and Power of *Samſon* lodged in the Hair of his Head, which the *Philiſtines* could never have imagined; ſo the Strength and Power of Death conſiſts in ſuch Things as the World leaſt dreams of. The moſt dreadful Weapons with which it terrifies and beats us, are the Thunderbolts and Curſes of the *Law*; and our Sins are Poiſon in which it dips its Arrows, or rather our Sins are fiery Darts with which it wounds and deſtroys us. Now *Jeſus Chriſt* hath *redeemed us from the Curſe of the Law, when he became a Curſe for us*, Gal. iii. He hath carried our Sins in his Body upon the Croſs, 1 *Pet.* ii. and, as the He-goat *Harazel*, hath tranſported them away into an uninhabitable Deſart, *Lev.* xvi. he hath removed them from the Eyes of our God, as far as the *Eaſt* is from the *Weſt*; he hath caſt them to the Bottom of the Ocean, and drowned them in his Blood: So that we may now ſee fulfilled what was foretold by the Prophet *Jeremiah*; *The Iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the Sins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found*, Chap i.

Therefore being befriended with the Grace of God, and armed with the Virtue of his Holy Spirit, let us ſhew our Courage, and defy Death; let us look it in the Face without Fear, laugh at all its Threats, and encounter it without Dread: For it is now like an inſolent Soldier without Weapons; it is like a Bee without its Sting; it is like an old Lion that roars, but hath loſt all its Claws; it is like a Snake that would convey its poiſon, but hath no venomous Teeth left, having been pulled out by him who hath bruiſed the Serpent's Head.

If you conſider nothing but Death's Exterior, its Face and fearful Appearance, its frigid Eyes, its meagre Body, its ironed Hands; you cannot perceive any Difference between the Death of God's Children, and that of the moſt wicked Varlets. But if thou lift up the Maſk, and examine the Death of the one, and of the other, more exactly, you will meet with as great Difference as betwixt Heaven and Earth, the Paradiſe of God and Hell: For as *Moſes's* brazen Serpent, which he lifted up in the Deſart, had the Form and Appearance of a burning Serpent, but nothing of the Poiſon and Fire; thus the Death of the Faithful appears as the Death of other Men, but hath not the deadly and pernicious Conſequences; for it is not only a Sign and a Teſtimony of God's Grace and Favour, but the Beginning of our Deliverance, and the Cure of all Diſeaſes. As *Moſes*, when he had caſt Wood into the Waters of *Marah*, they had the ſame Colour, but not the ſame Bitterneſs and unpleaſant Taſte: Thus the Death of God's deareſt Children hath the ſame Tincture and Appearance as before; but Chriſt's Croſs hath taken away the Danger, the Trouble, and extracted out of it diſtaſteful Bitterneſs, and changed it into unſpeakable Sweetneſs. As *Pharaoh* was drowned before all his Army in the Waters of the *Red-Sea*, but the Children of *Iſrael* found a ſecure and pleaſant Paſſage into the promiſed Land; when they were arrived upon the other Shore of that dreadful Sea, they ſung unto God Songs of Triumph and Thankſgiving: Thus Death opens its Jaws to devour the Reprobates, it is an Abyſs where they can find no Bottom; but unto the Children of God it is a favourable Paſſage into an eternal Bliſs; as ſoon as they are gone through, they are arrived at the Place of Aſſurance, Joy, and Reſt, where God furniſhes them with Songs of Triumph and Thankſgiving to the Lamb, *Rev.* i. 15.

Balaam the Prophet was called to curſe the People of God, but he bleſſed them, contrary to the vain Expectation

tation of *Balak*, King of *Mohab*. Thus Death hath been brought into the World by the Devil, to deſtroy and utterly aboliſh the whole Seed; but by God's infinite Goodneſs and Wiſdom hath changed it into Salvation and Bleſſing. Let us therefore not be any longer puzzled to find out the Meaning of *Samſon's* Riddle; *Out of the Eater, came forth Meat, and out of the Strong came forth Sweetneſs*, Judg. xiv. For the Church of God, unto whom *Chriſt* hath diſcovered the moſt excellent Secrets of his Kingdom, teaches us to ſeek the ſweeteſt Comforts out of the Belly of this old Lion.

It is not poſſible to judge of Muſick by a ſingle Note, or of an Oration by a Period, nor of a Comedy by a Scene. So we muſt not judge of a Battle by the firſt Aſſault, nor of a Wreſtling by the firſt Embraces and Efforts of the Wreſtlers: For ſome in the Beginning of the Battle turn their Backs, who nevertheleſs at laſt often win the Victory; and ſome in Wreſtling are foiled at the Beginning, who nevertheleſs ſupplant their Enemy, and caſt him upon the Ground. Therefore, that we may better underſtand the great and notable Advantages we have over Death, we muſt examine it all along until the End of the Encounter; we muſt take Notice of every Aſſault that we give unto this irreconcileable Enemy.

As ſoon as the Taper of our Life begins to burn, *Satan* ſends forth his Blaſt to extinguiſh it. Death labours to undermine this poor Dwelling from the firſt Moment that it was built, beſieges it on all Sides, makes its Approaches; in Time it ſaps the Foundation, it batters us with ſeveral Diſeaſes, and unexpected Accidents; every Day it opens a Breach, and pulls out of this Building ſome Stones. But if Death labours to demoliſh on his Part, we on ours labour to repair: And as thoſe who built the Walls of *Jeruſalem* held with one Hand the Trowel, and with the other a Sword to fight; ſo we defend ourſelves, as well as we are able, againſt the Aſſaults of Death. Therefore we do not only endeavour to preſerve this earthly Lodge, that

God

God hath let and ſet to us for a Term, and to mend up the continual Dilapidations that happen in it: But at the very Sight of Death, when it gives us the Aſſault, we do then alſo advance our ſpiritual Building, and labour to bring it to Perfection. So that we may ſay, as the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, *if our outward Man decays, the inward Man is renewed Day by Day*, 2 Cor. iv.

To ſpeak right, Death meddles with nothing but with the exterior Part of Man: For our principal Fort and chief Bulwark hath no Cauſe to fear to be undermined or ſapped, nor to be won by Aſſault; for it is raiſed above the Heavens, and built upon the Rock of Eternity. It cannot be battered: For as the Thunderbolts, the Storms of Hail and ill Weather, cannot prejudice the Sun-beams, becauſe they are of a Spiritual Nature; ſo all the Fury of the World, and all the Powers of Hell, and the Rage of Death, can never wrong the Soul, that is of a Spiritual and immortal Nature; this Caſtle can never be famiſhed, for God furniſhes it with Manna from Heaven; and from the Rock upon which it is built there runs a Source of living Waters, that riſes to everlaſting Life. In a Word, as the Serpents crawl only upon the Duſt, Death hath no Power but upon the earthly Part of Man; therefore our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* adviſeth his Apoſtles, *not to fear them that kill the Body, but cannot kill the Soul.*

At the very Inſtant of our Soul's Separation from the Body, Death ſeems to have a great Advantage upon us; but when I conſider all, I find it hath no Cauſe to boaſt of the Victory. When a valiant Captain marches out of a Town almoſt deſtroyed, to another more ſecured and better fortified, with his Weapons in his Hand; we ſay that he has quitted his Station, and not that he is overcome. Thus when the wretched Body decays, and that our Souls depart well armed with Faith and Hope, to lodge in a more ſecure Place in the higheſt Heavens; nobody can ſay, to ſpeak properly, that we have been overcome. And as it happens to ſuch as ſail on the Ocean, when a violent Storm

threatens

threatens them with Shipwreck, they think themselves very happy if they can quit their Vessel, leave it to the Mercy of the Winds and Waves, and escape to Land with their Riches and Lives safe: Thus it is with us who sail upon the tempestuous Sea of this World; when Death raises its most cruel Storms, we think ourselves happy if we can leave this miserable Body, which seems as a Ship to our Souls; and if we can secure our spiritual Life, and our heavenly Riches. Therefore we may justly say to the Faithful, that are frighted when they see Death threatening to drown them in its Depths, as St. *Paul* to the Ship's Company, who trembled for Fear at the Sight of roaring and swelling Waves, *Take good Courage, my Brethren, for I assure you, in the Name of the living God, that your Lives are secure, and that you shall lose nothing but this Ship*, Acts xxvii. We may furnish them with stronger Comforts; for these good Mariners lost their Ship without Hopes of recovering it again; but we are assured, that God will one Day gather up every Piece of the broken Vessels of our Bodies, and will join them together in a more perfect Estate.

Therefore Death doth not carry away our Bodies by Violence, but we leave them willingly; we do not stay for its Summons, but we do prevent Death, and give it a Licence; when we have packed up our Bag and Baggage, we are ready to depart out of this wretched Abode, where we endure all Manner of Calamities; for in this House Defluctions fall down, Vapours arise, the Pillars and Foundations tremble, the Joints open, the Windows are darkened, and the burning Fevers like violent Fires, consume it.

I must not forget that the Faithful name their Death not only a Removal of their Lodging, but a Removal from a Tabernacle. This teaches us, that we must depart from hence with as much Joy and Readiness, as a Soldier doth out of his Tabernacle, at the End of a laborious and bloody Warfare; and with as much Pleasure as the Children of *Israel* did out of their Camps, in which

which they had remained in the Deſart, to enter into the ſweet and comfortable Dwellings of the Land of *Canaan*.

Not only that Body is like to an hired Horſe, or to a Tabernacle tranſported up and down; but it is by Sin become to our Soul a woeful Priſon. Therefore Death may be compared to the Meſſengers ſent by King *Pharaoh*, on purpoſe to take *Joſeph* out of the Dungeon, and bring him to his Palace. The Body that was created to be a noble Pavilion of Joy and Honour, is become to our Soul a wretched incommodious Priſon; and Death is like to the Furnace of *Babylon*, that burnt and conſumed the Bands of the three Children without prejudicing their Perſons or Attire, *Dan.* iii. For it deſtroys the natural Bands that detain our Souls enſlaved to the Earth, but meddles not with its Ornaments, with its Righteouſneſs and Sanctification. It is like the Skin that encloſed the Child in its Mother's Womb, or like the Shell where the Chick is formed: for of Neceſſity it muſt be broken before we can enter into immortal Life. In ſhort, we may ſay, that the Body, which was given to the Soul for its Palace, is become by Sin, its Grave, and loathſome Sepulchre, far more noiſome than that of *Lazarus*; and that death is like the Voice that calls upon us, *Lazarus come forth*. Faithful Souls, you ſee then that as *Samſon* carried away the Gates of the City of *Gaza*, and tranſported them to the Top of the Hill, ſo hath *Jeſus Chriſt*, our true *Samſon*, tranſported and carried the Gates of Death to the higheſt Pitch of Glory: Therefore, whereas before we looked upon it with Horror as the Entrance of Hell, now we may behold it with Confidence and Joy, ſaying, as *Jacob* did of *Bethel*, *This is the Gate of Heaven*.

Seeing therefore, that this is the Nature and Condition of Death, I find that Men give it too much Advantage; for we ſhould not offer to ſay, that ſuch are dead, whom God hath admitted into eternal Life; becauſe the Qualification ſhould be derived from the chief and nobleſt Part: As it is in Nature, there is no Gene-

Generation without Corruption; and we commonly ſay, that it is a Generation, when the Thing engendered is more excellent than the Thing corrupted; on the contrary, that it is a Corruption, when the Thing corrupted excels the Thing that is engendered. For this Reaſon our Change and Removal out of this World ſhall rather be ſtiled a Life than Death: Tho' our Body dies and rots in the Earth, our Soul revives, and mounts up to Heaven; and this mortal Life, which we leave with the World, is nothing in Compariſon of that Life which we ſhall enjoy with *Chriſt*, and his holy Angels. God is named the God of *Abraham*, of *Iſaac*, and of *Jacob*. *Now he is not the God of the Dead, but of the living*, Exod. iv. Matt. xxii.

I may alſo without any Figure affim, that Death, in reſpect to the Body, is no real Death, but a Kind of Sleep; as is ſaid in the Phrophet *Daniel*, *Many ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth*, Ch. xii. And in *Iſaiah*, That the *Juſt ſleep in their Beds*. Therefore our Saviour, ſpeaking of *Jarius's* Daughter, declared, *The Child is not dead, but ſleepeth*, Mat. ix. And *Lazarus* his Friend, *Lazarus our Friend ſleepeth, and I go to awake him*. Beloved, if thou art of the Number of ſuch as *Chriſt* loveth, thy Death will be but a Kind of Sleep of a ſhort Continuance, and of a few Days; the Lord will raiſe thee up again; *for the Hour cometh and is already, that the Dead ſhall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that ſhall hear ſhall revive*, John v. During this Life, the Aſſaults of Death are no better than light Skirmiſhes; the moſt ſenſible and moſt dangerous Blow that it ſtrikes, in Appearance, when it ſeparates the Soul from the Body; but the laſt and moſt final Encounter, that will put an end to all Diſputes, will be at the Day of Judgement, when *Jeſus Chriſt* will appear from Heaven, with the Hoſt of all his immortal Angels and Saints, to encourage us to the Encounter. He will come with an encouraging Voice of an Archangel, and the laſt Trumpet ſhall ſound. Then Death will endeavour to keep us ſtill in its black Priſons, and our Bones

Bones will be found without Life or Motion but the Spirit of God ſhall breathe upon theſe dry Bones and will cauſe them to revive. As when the prophet *Jonas* was three Days and three Nights in the Belly of a Whale, God commanded the Fiſh to vomit him up again upon the Ground; thus, when we ſhall have made ſo long our Abode in our Graves, as God hath appointed in his Wiſdom, Death ſhall be forced to reſtore all that it hath ſwallowed. And as *Daniel* came out of the Lion's Den by Break of Day, thoſe ſavage Beaſts having done him no Harm; thus at the Break of the laſt Day, at the Riſing of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, we ſhall all go out of Death's deep Dens; and as if God had ſent an Angel on purpoſe to ſhut the Mouth of this old Lion, we ſhall then find that it hath done us no Harm. Inſtead of devouring us, it will prove a faithful Keeper of our Bones. The Faithful then may ſpeak to Death in the Language of the Prophet *Micah*, *Rejoice not againſt me, O mine Enemy; when I ſhall fall, I ſhall riſe; when I ſit in Darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a Light unto me*, Micah vii. 8. As *Moſes* ſaid to *Pharaoh*, *We will go into the Wilderneſs to ſacrifice unto our God, we will go out of thine* Egypt *with our Young and with our Old, with our Sons and with our Daughters, with our Flocks and with our Herds; there ſhall not a Hoof be left behind*, Exod. x. Thus we, in an holy Confidence, may talk with Death; maugre thy Rage and Fury we will go up to Heaven to ſacrifice to our God immortal Praiſe; we ſhall get out of thy Fetters; we, our Wives, our Children, our Brothers and Siſters, our Parents and Friends, all the People of God, whom thou doſt at preſent keep in a cloſe Reſtraint. Notwithſtanding the infernal Attempts of thine inhuman Power, there ſhall not remain ſo much as an Handful, no, not ſo much as the leaſt Grain of our Aſhes behind us.

When the Son of God ſhall appear in his Glory, from Heaven, he ſhall conſume all Death's Trophies and Monuments with irreſiſtible Flames; ſo that it

ſhall

ſhall happen to this imperious Enemy of Mankind, as it happened to the Kings of the *Amorites* mentioned in the *Iſraelitiſh* Hiſtory, *Joſh.* x. 24. *Joſhua* ſuffered them to live until he had returned from his Victory; and when he had perfectly overcome all his Enemies, he commanded them to be brought forth, and gave Orders to his Captains to tread upon their Necks; and with his own Sword he diſpatched them, caſt them into a Cave, and cauſed great Stones to be rolled at the Entrance of it. Thus ſhall our true and celeſtial *Joſhua* deal with Death; he ſuffers it to reign while he is gone to purſue his Enemies; for the laſt Enemy that ſhall be deſtroyed by him, is Death. When he ſhall have perfectly purſued all other Enemies, he will crown all his Victories with a glorious End, and accompliſh the Church's Triumph, by cauſing us to trample upon Death, that ſhall be caſt in the bottomleſs Pit, whereof the Entrance ſhall be ſhut up for ever, *Rev.* x. Then ſhall be accompliſhed this glorious Prophecy, *Death is ſwallowed up in Victory*, 1 Cor. xv. For the Spirit of God aſſures us, in expreſs Terms, *That Death ſhall be no more.*

By what we have ſaid, it may eaſily appear, what is become of the Rope thrice twiſted by the Devil, with an Intent to ſtrangle therewith all Mankind. The Son of God hath cut in Pieces the firſt of theſe unhappy Ties, by the Almighty Power; by the Spirit of *Sanctification* he looſens the ſecond by Degrees; and by the laſt he draws us to himſelf, and then he burns and conſumes it altogether. Therefore we have no Reaſon to fear an eternal Death, nor to tremble when Hell opens its wide Jaws. If we *reſiſt the Devil he flees away from us*, Jam. iv. At laſt we ſhall trample him under our Feet, *Rom.* xiv. It is true, that the ſad and doleful Effects of the ſpiritual Death commonly draw out of us many a ſad Groan and Tear, whilſt our Souls remain in this Sinful Fleſh. We are already got out of the Tombs of Corruption and Sin, but yet bear about us, as it were, our Winding-ſheet, and

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ſome odd Reliques of our natural Miſery. But we have this Conſideration to comfort our drooping Spirits, That *Chriſt* will ſhortly give the ſame Order from Heaven to us, as he did for *Lazarus*, *Looſe him; and let him go*, John xi. So that inſtead of the Corruption of our Nature, that is ſo incommodious to us, he will inveſt us in an Eſtate of Glory, Incorruption, Immortality, and perfect Happineſs. In relation to the Natural Death, we may juſtly ſay, That our Lord and Saviour hath freed us from all the Fears that it might cauſe in us. So that it is my Judgement, that we may not only affirm, that we have not the leaſt Apprehenſion of it; but we may expect it with Confidence: For if we be truly of the Number of the Faithful, and God's adopted Sons, we hope, deſire, and rather haſten Death's Arrival, by our moſt earneſt and paſſionate Wiſhes.

What I have already declared in this Chapter, might ſatisfy any Chriſtian Soul, and furniſh it with ſufficient Conſiderations to ſtrengthen it againſt all Apprehenſions from Death. Now, as one who wants to buy Stuffs in a Shop, when he cheapens ſuch as are ſlight, and of ſmall Value, caſts his Eye only upon a Piece or Pattern, and by that judges of the reſt; but when he intends to purchaſe a rich Tapeſtry of great Value, he deſires to view and conſider every Part, one after another, and make an Eſtimation of the Value and Beauty of every Corner; ſo I judge that the wiſe and religious Reader will deſire now, that as I have diſcovered to him, in groſs, the Body of *Conſolations againſt the Fears of Death*, I ſhould, in the next Place, unfold the hidden Excellencies, produce every Part of them by Degrees to his Contemplation, and with my Pen make him take Notice of all the Rarities.

CHAP. VI.

From whence proceed the Fears of Death.

AS a wise and discreet Physician usually examines with Care the Causes of the Disease, before he prescribes a Remedy; and as an experienced Surgeon searcheth the Wound before he puts the Plaister to it; thus I judge it necessary to seek with Diligence from whence the Fears of Death proceed, before we shall appoint Remedies to the faithful Souls: For when we shall perfectly understand the Nature of the Disease, and its principal Causes, we shall, without Difficulty, be better able to assign a convenient Remedy; when we shall have searched the Wound, and washed it clean, we will, with God's Assistance, pour into it the true Balm of *Gilead*.

1. We have just Reason to accuse ourselves of too much Unmindfulness of Death. We do not meditate so often as we should upon the Misery and Frailty of our poor decaying Nature. We acknowledge it, I confess, with our Tongues, that our Life is but a Breath in our Nostrils, a Vapour that soon disappears, a shadow that quickly vanishes away; but in the mean Time we flatter ourselves in our Hearts with more pleasant Thoughts and Desires, as *Herod*, that Men should look upon us as so many little Gods, *Acts* xii. We suffer ourselves to be deceived by the flattering Insinuations of our corrupted Flesh, and by the delusive Suggestions of the old Serpent, that whispers to us, as to our first Parents, *You shall not die*, Gen. iii.

2. We commonly affirm, That Death is inexorable; nevertheless, for the most Part, we live as if we had made an Agreement with Death, and had secret Intelligence with the Grave, *Isa.* xxii. Death approaches with Feet of Wool, without Noise; we imagine, therefore, that it never will come near us; as that wicked Servant in the Gospel, *Matt.* xxiv. who con-

concluded, from his Maſter's Delays of coming, that he would not come at all. We hate and abominate the Sight of all Things that repreſent unto us any Appearance of Death, or that call to our Minds its Remembrance. If at any Time its Image come in our Way, we turn from it our Eyes, and baniſh out of our Fancy all Imaginations of it, as of a moſt odious and deceitful Illuſion. Death ſeizes upon us before we have well thought whether we be mortal or no. Therefore we are ſurprized and aſtoniſhed at the Approaches; and we become like the fooliſh *Iſraelites*, who trembled and fled before *Goliath*, becauſe they were not accuſtomed to behold him.

3. We depend too much upon ſecond Cauſes. We look upon Death as a Thing that happens by chance, or as an Evil that may be prevented, or at leaſt put away for a Time; whereas we ſhould be fully perſuaded, that God hath determined and appointed, not only Death itſelf, but alſo all the Cauſes and Means by which it commonly happens. Therefore we are often filled with Diſpleaſure, and ſeduced to murmur and repine againſt God. We grin, and bite the Stone, inſtead of adoring in all Humility that wiſe Hand that caſt it. In a Word, whenever Death comes to us, we are ready to ſay to it, as the Devils to our Saviour. *Wherefore art thou come to torment us before the Time?* Matt. viii.

4. We are too much tied to this Earth; we are ſo united to the World, that we would willingly make here our Abode for ever; and cannot abide to hear, that Death will remove us. Our Luſts have no Bounds, and we often ſpend ourſelves in the Purſuance of theſe miſerable Advantages. When we draw neareſt to the End of our Life, and of our mortal Race, it is then that many are moſt earneſt to make large Proviſions of worldly Vanities. We build ſtately Dwellings, and ſumptuous Palaces, at that very Moment when we ſhould think of nothing but building our Tomb, and repairing our Winding-ſheet.

We have so violent a Passion for all the Enjoyments of this Life, that to separate us from them, is to pluck out our Hearts, and to tear in pieces our tender Bowels. When Death comes to our Bed-side, and offers to pull us out, we are ready to say as the Sluggard in the *Proverbs*, *A little Sleep, a little Slumber, a little Folding of the Hands*, Ch. vi. When our divine Bridegroom knocks at our Gates, we are scarce willing to abandon our Delights, as the Spouse in the *Canticles*. What! saith the Worldling, must I leave my sumptuous Palaces, my pleasant Dwellings, and my delightful Gardens? Must I relinquish all this rich Tapestry, these precious Moveables, and all these rare and exquisite Ornaments, that enrich my Parlours, Chambers, and Closets? Must this unmerciful Death divest me so soon of all Offices and Dignities, and hinder me from a full and peaceable Enjoyment of all these Riches and Treasures? Must it ravish from me in an Instant all my Delights and Satisfactions? Is there no Remedy? But must I be plucked from the Embraces of my beloved Wife, from the Sight of my dear Children, and from the sweet Company of all my Friends? Must I receive no more the Services of my Domesticks? When we are in this unprepared State, it is no Wonder if Death is so terrible to us, and if it causes us to feel the Sharpness of its Sting: For as of *Absalom*, when he was hanged by the Hair of the Head in a Tree of the Forest, *Joab* took three Darts, and struck him through the Heart; thus, when our Affections are too much entangled with the World, and with the Expectation of earthly Contentments, it is then that they are miserably exposed to all the Darts and violent Attempts of Death.

5. Another principal Cause of the Fear of Death is a wicked Life. We are plunged in the Vices and Debaucheries of the Age. We suffer ourselves to be corrupted by ill Company, and carried away with the Torrent of vicious Customs. It is therefore no Wonder

der if Death fills our Souls with Apprehenſions, becauſe it comes to us armed with our Sins, and is preſſed by the Remorſe of Conſcience, and Horror of our Crimes. How comes it to paſs that ſuch a terrible Aſtoniſhment fell upon King *Belſhazzar*, when he ſaw the Fingers of an Hand, writing upon the Wall of his Palace the Sentence of his Doom! *Dan.* v. It was, becauſe he had profaned the holy Veſſels of God's Houſe, and was rioting in the Society of laſcivious Women. Wherefore did *Felix* tremble, when he heard St. *Paul* diſcourſe of *Juſtice*, *Temperance*, and of *Judgment to come?* Acts xxiv. It was, becauſe he was a wicked Varlet, given over to all manner of filthy and unjuſt Living. Thus, becauſe we profane the Members of our Body, which are as the Veſſels of God's Sanctuary; and becauſe our Lives are vicious and diſorderly, we cannot abide to hear Death mentioned; and when it cometh to us, we are ready to ſpeak to it in *Felix's* Language to St. *Paul*, *Depart for this Time.* So that the Love of Sin, and the Fear of Death, are as two Siſters, who hold one another by the Hands; or rather they are Twins, that are born and die together. As the Prophet *Amos* ſaid to the *Iſraelites*, *Ye put far the evil Day, and cauſe the Seat of Violence to come near*, Amos vi. ſo we may ſay of the Men of this Age; You put as far from you as you can the Day of Death, and draw near to all Manner of Impurity, Covetouſneſs, Ambition, Pride, Vanity, Uſury, Rapine, Violence, Envy, Malice, and ſuch-like Soul-plagues. You do not only draw near to theſe abominable Vices, but what is worſe, you lodge them in your Bowels, and harbour them in your Hearts. Certainly we may well apply to all vicious Perſons, what the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſays of *Jeruſalem*, *Her Filthineſs is in her Skirts*, *ſhe remembereth not her laſt End*, Lam. i.

6. I have taken Notice of another Defect in us: We miſtruſt the Providence of God, and know not how to repoſe ourſelves upon his fatherly Care. We

have a too worthy Eſteem of ourſelves, and of our own Sufficiency. We cannot reſolve to die, becauſe we fancy ourſelves very uſeful in the World, and that our Death would be a conſiderable Loſs to the Church of God, to the State, or to our Family.

7. Becauſe the Soul and Body are linked together in a very ſtrict Union, we cannot imagine how they can be ſeparated without great and unſpeakable Convulſions. Our Infidelity is ſo great, that we cannot reſt ſatisfied upon the Promiſes of God, who engages to ſuccour us in our Diſtreſs, and to deliver us from all our Troubles, *Iſa.* l. It is true, *Jacob's* Ladder, that reaches from the Earth to Heaven, may raviſh us; but it ſeems very uneaſy to aſcend: Paradiſe is rich, glorious, and delightful to the uttermoſt; but its Gate is ſtrait, and choaked up with Thorns and Briars.

8. I judge that one of the chief Cauſes of the Fear of Death is, becauſe we look upon God as a moſt ſevere and mercileſs Judge, inflamed with Anger and Fury againſt us, and armed with Vengeance: whereas we ſhould conſider and acknowledge him to be a merciful Father, full of Compaſſion and Kindneſs for Mankind. Every Slave trembles at the Sight of his Lord; and there is no Malefactor but is afraid when he appears before his Judge, to be put to the Rack; and can I, who am all ſpotted with Sin, and blackened with Crimes, can I appear before that glorious Throne, that cauſes the Seraphims to cover their Faces with their Wings? *Iſa.* vi. How can I that am but Stubble, ſubſiſt in the Preſence of the God of Vengeance, *who is a conſuming Fire?* Heb. x.

9. There is another viſible Fault in us: We do not embrace with a true and lively Faith, the Death and Paſſion of our Lord and Saviour. We all ſpeak of *Jeſus Chriſt* crucified; but we do not know the divine Virtue of his Crucifixion, nor feel its Efficacy. We do not conſider, that his Death hath broken down the Partition that ſhuts us out of the Heavenly Sanctuary; and that his Blood hath tracked us a Way to Para-

diſe, and procured us an Entrance into that Place of eternal Bliſs.

10. Now, to prevent the Horror of the Grave, we do not conſider, as we ought, our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* in the Tomb, and that he hath ſanctified it with his holy and Divine Preſence. We do not imprint in our Imaginations, that it is juſt and reaſonable that we ſhould be conformable to Chriſt in his Abaſement, if we will have any Share with him in Glory and Exaltation.

11. Beſides, that which entertains in our Souls the Fear of Death, is this: We look upon it as if it were in its full Strength and Vigour; whereas we ſhould remember, that *Jeſus Chriſt* hath overcome and diſarmed Death by his powerful Reſurrection; and that, for our Parts, we need but follow the Footſteps of his glorious Victories, and faſten that furious Beaſt to his triumphant Chariot.

12. We do not conſider as we ſhould, with a ſerious and religious Application of Mind, how our Saviour Chriſt is not only riſen from the Sepulchre victorious over Death, but that he is alſo aſcended up into the higheſt Heavens, as our Fore-runner, to prepare a place for us; and that, by departing out of our miſerable Bodies, we follow the Path of our ever-bleſſed Saviour, to reap with him the Fruits of his moſt glorious Victories.

13. We ſtoop too much to conſider our frail, corruptible, and mortal Nature; and we ſeldom enter into this moſt uſeful Meditation, that by the Holy Ghoſt we are nearly and inſeparably united to *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Prince of Life, and the Source of Light; and that we have already in us the Seeds of Bleſſedneſs, of Glory, and Immortality.

14. As the Children of *Iſrael* murmured againſt *Moſes* in the Deſart, and wiſhed to be again in *Egypt*, forgetting their bitter Slavery, under which they had groaned, their painful Labouring amongſt the Bricks, and the Heat of their Furnaces, and minding only the

Pleasure which they had lost, they dreamed of nothing but the Plenty of Bread and Flesh, of the Cucumbers, Onions, and of the Meats with which they had so often filled their Bellies: Thus we repine at Death, because we do not dream of the Evils from which it delivers us; we think only upon the vain Pleasures, and seeming Advantages, of which it robs us.

15. We imagine that Death destroys and reduces us to nothing; and we do not consider, that it never meddles with the principal Part of our Being, but only pulls from off us Sin, and breaks the rest of the Chains of our spiritual Bondage; so that Death is rather the Death of Sin, than of the Faithful.

16. Here is another great Fault in us; we do not lift up our Minds to consider the Glory prepared for us at the Egress of our Souls out of our mortal Bodies. However we may demean ourselves, and whatever we may pretend, we do not firmly, without doubting, believe the Felicities which God promiseth to us in the Contemplation of his Face. Sometimes we may think upon the Joys of Paradise; but it is a Thought that passes through our Souls with too much Speed, and does not take any Root. So that many, if they were not ashamed, would be ready to speak in the Emperor *Adrian's* Language, *My little Soul, my dearest Darling, O Guest and Companion of my Body, whither art thou going?*

17. To these former Causes of the Fears of Death in us, we may add another: That we suffer our Eyes to dwell too much upon the Rottenness and Corruption that threaten our Body; whereas we should carry our Eye-sight to behold its glorious Resurrection, that shall soon follow. Pleasant Abode, and delightful Companion of my Soul, must Death, this cruel Death, separate it from thee with so much Violence? Must thou part with thy dear and sweet Companion? Must my Soul leave thee upon such grievous and lamentable Terms, That of so many Honours which have been heaped upon thee, thou shalt not carry so much

much as their Shadow to the grave? That of many rich Moveables and Treaſures, thou ſhalt bear away nothing but a Winding-ſheet, a few Boards, or, at the moſt, ſome Pounds of Lead? After thou haſt lived in ſo much Splendour and Magnificence, muſt thy Covering be at laſt the Worms? After thou haſt walked ſo proudly in Palaces gilded with Gold, and perfumed, muſt at laſt thy Confinement be in a ſtinking and loathſome Sepulchre? Muſt theſe beautiful Eyes be cloſed? Theſe Lips of Coral become pale? This golden Mouth be ſtopped? And muſt this dainty Fleſh rot, and become odious to the Eyes of the World?

18. In the next Place, we do not meditate as we ought upon that eternal Bliſs and Glory that hath been prepared for us from the Foundation of the World, and into which we ſhall enter, when *Chriſt Jeſus* ſhall come from Heaven with his holy Angels, to judge both the Quick and the Dead; when he ſhall reunite our Souls and Bodies together for all Eternity, that *He may be glorified in his Saints, and wonderful in all the Faithful.*

CHAP. VII.

The Firſt Remedy againſt the Fears of Death, is, to meditate often upon it.

WE become acquainted with the moſt dreadful Things by Cuſtom and Converſation. Freſh Soldiers commonly quaver and ſhake at the Sight of an Enemy; they tremble at the Vollies of Shot, and, half-dead, fall to the Ground at the terrible Noiſe of the great Ordnance. But when their Courage hath been hardened by a long Exerciſe, they can then, without Fear, ſeek the Enemy in his greateſt Advantages, and can go as merrily to the Combat, as to a Feaſt, or a Triumph. The Showers of ſmall Shot, the

the Lightening and Thunder of the Cannon, cannot make them ſo much as to ſhut their Eyes or ſtoop their Heads; they then laugh at their former Apprehenſions: Thus the firſt Conceits of Death commonly terrify us; but when we ſeriouſly meditate upon it, and look it in the Face, we ſhall not only contemn it, but we ſhall ſeek it boldly in its Retreats, and with an undaunted Countenance; we ſhall behold Death let fly all its Arrows, and caſting its Thunderbolts, without the leaſt Apprehenſions. As they who are not wont to ſee ſavage Beaſts, dare not draw near to them, and can ſcarce look upon them without Fear; but ſuch as are familiarly acquainted with them, can touch them without Apprehenſion, and freely play with them: Thus it is with them who never had any Confidence to look Death in the Face; they tremble, and are filled with Aſtoniſhment, as ſoon as they ſee its Approaches; but they who often behold Death, are familiarly acquainted with it, and therefore they can with Confidence thruſt their Fiſts into its Jaws. *Moſes* fled away from his Rod, when it was firſt turned into a Serpent; but when he began to take it in his Hand, and ſaw that it returned to its former Shape and Being, he was far from running from it, or entertaining the leaſt Apprehenſion of it; he made a very happy Uſe of it, and by God's Command wrought many Miracles. Thus it is with Death, it frights us at firſt, but if we can but take hold of it with Hands of a true and lively Faith, it will be ſo far from ſcaring or frightening us, that it will diſcover to us a World of delightful Wonders.

Death therefore is ſo far from terrifying ſuch as are accuſtomed to it, that it fills them full of Comfort and Joy. As a Child that looks upon the Father who hath a Vizard on his Face, is frighted and begins to cry; but if he hath but the Confidence to pull off the Vizard, and take but Notice of the loving Smiles of his Parent hid under that Deformity, he will not only ceaſe from Weeping, and ſettle his Mind, but he will alſo leap for Joy, and embrace him: Thus, if

we

we look upon Death with a timorous Countenance, and behold its hideous Appearance, we ſhall be ſtruck with a ſudden Horror; but if we can with any Aſſurance lift up his Vizard, we ſhall ſoon diſcover our heavenly Father, and with Tears of Joy we ſhall run to embrace him. As the Apoſtles, when they eſpied *Jeſus Chriſt* in the Night walking upon the Waves of the Sea, cried out in a Fright, thinking that it had been a Spirit; but when he drew near to them, and they heard his Voice, they perceived him to be their Saviour; when therefore they had received him into their Ship, the Storm ceaſed immediately: Thus, if we look upon Death at a Diſtance, the Blindneſs and Ignorance with which we are poſſeſſed will repreſent to us a frightful Spirit; but if we examine and behold it nearer, by the Help of the Goſpel-Light, we ſhall find it to be our Salvation, and the Accompliſhing of our Redemption. All our Fears will then be calmed, and our Souls will return to their former Temper. In a Word, as he that runs from his Enemy increaſes his Courage, and renders him more earneſt, and reſolved to purſue him; thus, when Death ſees us tremble, and decline its Approaches, it becomes more proud and imperious over us. We muſt therefore think betimes of Death, repreſent it to ourſelves continually, and enter into an acquaintance with it. It was holy *Job's* Practice; for he *cried unto the Pit, Thou art my Father; and to Corruption and Worms, Ye are my Mother and my Siſters,* Job xvi. And I imagine that this was the chief Reaſon of *Philip* of *Macedon's* commanding a Page every Morning to rouze him out of his Sleep, with, *O King! remember thou art a mortal Man.* For by this often-repeated Leſſon he laboured to humble his lofty Mind, and teach his frail Nature not to glory ſo much in the Splendor of his Crown and Sceptre, nor to abuſe the Power committed to his Truſt. By this Means alſo he became acquainted with Death, that it might not ſeem ſtrange when it ſhould come in earneſt and ſnatch him away. This was alſo the

Deſign

Deſign of the Emperor *Meruan*, or *Meruanes*, who cauſed this Motto to be engraved on his Seal, *Remember that thou muſt die.* Theſe Words minded him of that which his Courtiers were afraid to mention to him. So that this great Prince never confirmed with his Seal the Death of any Man, but at the ſame Time he repreſented to himſelf, that his own Death was not to be avoided. For the ſame Reaſon the Noblemen of *China* are wont to have their Coffins ready made in their Chambers, that at every Moment they might look Death in the Face. And for that Intent the *Egyptians*, in their moſt ſumptuous Feaſts, commonly placed a Dead Man's Skull in an eminent Corner of the Room. By this Spectacle they intended not only to oblige the Gueſts to moderate their Joys, and to reſtrain their unruly Luſts, but alſo to bring them acquainted with, and to accuſtom them to behold Death, amongſt all their Delights. They treated it as if their Deſign had been to invite it to their moſt delicious Feaſt, that they might rejoice together with it, *John* xvi. I conceive that the *Jews* for the ſame Cauſe built their Sepulchres in their Gardens of Pleaſure, that they alſo might have the Image of Death continually before them, and that in the Midſt of all their Divertiſements, it might be their moſt pleaſant and ordinary Entertainment. For us Chriſtians, to oblige us to think upon Death, there is no need that a Page ſhould remember us every Day that we are mortal, nor that the Motto of a Ring ſhould call to our Mind that we muſt die; there is no need of a Coffin to be placed in our Chambers: In ſuch Things there is many Times more Oſtentation than Piety: Nor is it needful that a dead Man's Skull be put before your Eyes, or that a Sepulchre be built or hewn in our Gardens and Places of Recreation and Delight: For as *Alexander the Great* underſtood that he was a Mortal, by the Blood that ran out of his Wounds; thus the Diſeaſes unto which we are ſubject, and the daily Infirmities that we feel, ſufficiently inſtruct and

aſſure

aſſure us that we are Mortals: And as a famous Philoſopher, when he received the unhappy News of his Son's untimely Death, anſwered the Meſſenger with a ſettled Countenance, *I knew* ſaid he, *that I begot him a mortal Man*, Xenoph. Thus will the Faithful ſay, without Change of Countenance, or Appearance of Fear, when his Death is declared to him, I knew that my Mother had conceived me a mortal Man; I knew very well that Death is the Tribute that we muſt pay to Nature, and that upon this Condition I am entered into the World.

If we will make uſe of any exterior Help to imprint this Leſſon into our Fancy, we muſt practiſe with Care the Advice of the wiſe Man; *It is better to go to the Houſe of Mourning, than to that of Feaſting*, Eccleſ. vii. *for that is the End of all Men, and the Living will lay it to his Heart.* Never look upon a deceaſed Body ſtretched upon a Bed, or upon a dead Corpſe in a Coffin, but remember that this is an univerſal Law, unto which all Mankind muſt pay Obedience; that it is the broad Road of all the Earth, and that there thou mayeſt behold the lively Image of thy future State. I conceive this may be a good Expedient, and very ſucceſsful, to entertain in our Minds the continual Thoughts of Death, to make our laſt Will betimes, and frequently to peruſe it: For as, when we meditate upon a Farewel that we are to take of our Friends, we feel in our Souls the ſame Affections and Motions as are in us at the Moment of our Separation; thus will it be with us, when we ſeriouſly meditate upon the laſt Farewel that we are to bid to the World. Death will ſeem to appear upon our Lips, or rather we ſhall think ourſelves already in the ſweet Embraces of the divine *Jeſus*, our glorious Redeemer.

Beſides thoſe Things that are extraordinary, I find nothing in or out of us, nothing that we feel, taſte, or reliſh; in ſhort, nothing that paſſeth either in our private or public Converſation, but is able to recall

to our Minds the ſerious Conſideration of Death: The Fleſh that thou doſt eat, the Wool that cloaths thy Nakedneſs, the Silk that adorns thy Body; in general, all thy Garments and Ornaments are but the Spoils of the dead Creatures. The Sight therefore of all theſe Things muſt call to Remembrance thy frail and mortal State, and cauſe thee to meditate upon the Preacher's Saying; *The ſame Accident that happens to the Beaſt, the ſame happens to Mankind; as is the Death of the one, ſo is the Death of the other. They have all the ſame Breath, and Man hath no Advantage over a Beaſt; for all is Vanity, all go to the ſame Place, all proceed from Duſt, and ſhall return to Duſt again.*

Never pull off thy Cloaths, but remember that thou muſt ſhortly quit this miſerable Body, and lay it down in the Grave. When thou art entering into thy Bed, think upon the Sepulchre where thou muſt one Day be ſtretched. If thou doſt awake in the Night, conſider that Death will ſhortly come, and put out the Taper of thy Life. Let thy Sleep be the Image of thy Death, and let it call to thy Mind how thou muſt, within a few Days, Sleep in a Bed of Duſt. When thou awakeſt, think upon the delightful Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet, that ſhall rouze thee out of Death's long Sleep. Say within thyſelf, when thou ariſeſt, It may be, that I ſhall never riſe again till the Son of God ſhall come from Heaven to lift me out of the Grave with his Almighty Hand. When we caſt our Eyes upon the riſing Sun, let us ſay within ourſelves, It may be, I ſhall never behold any other Sun riſe again, but the Sun of Righteouſneſs, that carried Healing under his Wings. Conſider when thou putteſt on thy Garments, that the Time is coming, when thou muſt be cloathed with a more magnificent and glorious Robe, a Robe of Light and Immortality. When thou ſitteſt down to eat, think upon the Hour that is drawing near, in which Death will feed upon thy Carcaſe; imagine that it may be, that this is the laſt Time that thou ſhalt ſit at the Table; that next thou mayeſt ſit with *Abraham*,

Abraham, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, with all the bleſſed Martyrs, who have waſhed and whitened their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb; and that it may be, that thou ſhalt never taſte any more, but of the Food of Angels, and of the Fruit of the Tree of Life; and that thou ſhalt never drink, but of the new Wine in the Kingdom of Heaven, and of the Rivers of eternal Pleaſures, that run from the Throne of God.

Every Night that thou goeſt out of thy Dwelling, or changeſt thy Abode, fancy to thyſelf, that in a little Time thou muſt depart out of this mortal Tabernacle. Art thou alone, and ſeparated from human Society? Remember that within a few Days Death will ſeparate and divide thee. Art thou going to any Meeting or entering into any Company, or marching to the holy Aſſemblies? Diſcourſe with thyſelf in this manner: It may be, that I ſhall never go into any other Company, until I come to the Church and Congregation of the Firſt born, whoſe Names are written in Heaven. Art thou invited to the Marriage of a Friend? Say, unto thy Soul, It may be, I ſhall never go to any other Feaſt, but to the Marriage of the Lamb offered from the Foundation of the World. Doſt thou ſee a rich and glorious Palace, or a Pleaſant Garden? Say to thyſelf, It may be I ſhall never ſee any other Palace, but that where the living God dwells; and it may be, I ſhall never behold any other Place of Pleaſure, but the celeſtial Paradiſe.

If thou caſteſt down thine Eyes to look upon the Earth upon which thou treadeſt, conſider at the ſame Time, that this Earth, or ſomething like to it, ſhall afford thee a Grave, and that thou ſhalt ſleep there the Sleep of Death. Remember what God told *Adam*, *Duſt thou art, unto Duſt thou ſhalt return*, Gen. iii. Or ſay with the holy Man *Job*, *Remember, I pray thee, that thou haſt formed me of Clay, and that thou ſhalt reduce me to Duſt; I ſhall ſleep in the Duſt, and if thou ſeekeſt for me in the Morning, I ſhall be no more*, Job vii.

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If thou takeſt a View of the Plants, of the Herbs, and Flowers, do not forget what the Word of God ſpeaks concerning our Life, in the xcth *Pſalm*, That *Man is like the Graſs which groweth up; in the Morning it flouriſheth, and is green; in the Evening it is cut down, and withered.* And in the ciiid *Pſalm*, *As for Man, his Days are as Graſs; as the Flowers of the Field, ſo he flouriſheth: For the Wind paſſeth over it, and it is gone, and the Place thereof ſhall know it no more.* And elſewhere, *All Fleſh is like Graſs, and the Glory of Man like the Flower of the Field*, Iſa. xl. 1 Pet. i.

If thou takeſt Notice of the Shadow of the Needle in a Dial, that follows the ſwift Motion of the Sun, or of the Shadows which ſolid Bodies caſt upon the Earth; in the Evening they ſtretch a great Way, and a little after vaniſh: Conſider ſeriouſly, and engrave in thy Mind this excellent Sentence; *Man is like Vanity, his Days are as a Shadow that paſſeth away*, Pſ. cxliv. and ſay, as *David*, *I am gone as a Shadow when it declineth*, Pſ. cix.

If thou heareſt the Whiſtling of the Winds, which God taketh out of the Store-houſes, lift up thy Soul unto God thy Creator, and ſay with *Job*, Chap. vii. *Remember that my Life is but a Wind, mine Eye ſhall ſee no more Good*; that is, the imaginary Good of this miſerable World. And elſewhere, *Thou lifteſt me up to the Wind, thou cauſeſt me to ride upon it, and diſſolveth my Subſtance*, Chap. xxx.

If thou lookeſt upon the Glory and Beauty of the Heavens, and beholdeſt the raviſhing Sight of the Stars, conſider that thy gracious God hath formed thee after his Image; not to continue always among this ſlimy and miſerable Earth, but to dwell with him for ever in the Heavens; and that at the End of the Race he will raiſe and carry thee into the Palace of his Glory, where thou ſhalt ſhine as the Sun in the greateſt Splendor.

If thou doſt meditate upon the Changeableneſs of the Seaſons, remember that the Spring of thy Infancy, the

the hot Summer of thy Youth, the Autumn of thy Maturity, and ſad-countenanced Winter of thy cold and decrepid Age, ſhall ſucceed one another in the ſame Order.

Let him who travels by Land, think upon *Job's* Complaint, *My Days have been ſwifter than a Poſt, they flee away, they ſee no Good*, Job ix. Let him call to mind the Apoſtle's excellent Saying, *This one Thing I do, forgetting thoſe Things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe Things which are before; I preſs forward toward the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God, through Chriſt Jeſus*, Phil. iii. 13.

Let him who ſails upon the Sea, fancy the whole World is a great Sea, ſwelling with waves, our Life as a dangerous Voyage, and our Days as Ships that paſs away in a Moment; and let him conſider, that the laſt Wind of Death will drive him into the Haven of eternal Felicity, to the Enjoyments of immortal Glory, *Job* ix.

Doth God bleſs us with Children? Let us underſtand that we are minded by them of our Mortality, for they come to take our Room, and to ſucceed in our Eſtate: Doth God take them away to his Reſt, and of whom we are moſt fond? Let this advertiſe us, that God intends thereby to cut off all the lower Roots that tie us to this Earth, to unlooſe our Hearts and Affections, that we may offer them up to him alone. Inſtead of ſpending our Lives in Tears, and indulging our fooliſh Humours in needleſs Diſpleaſures, let us comfort ourſelves with this Conſideration, That, by this Means, a Part of ourſelves is entered into Heaven, and that the other Part will follow a-pace. Let us ſay with *David*, *We ſhall go to them, but they ſhall not return to us.*

Let the Magiſtrate, whenever he delivers his Vote, or pronounces a Sentence, be provided with this Conſideration: That he who ſits in Judgement-Seat, here below, ſhall ſtand at the Bar, and be judged himſelf above: That one Day he ſhall appear as a poor

Priſoner at the Tribunal of his great God: That the Books will be opened, and that the univerſal Judge of the World will purſue every Particular of his Accuſation: That he muſt render an account, not only of his words and Actions, but alſo of his moſt ſecret Thoughts; and that without Examination at the Rack, God will diſcover the very Secrets of his Heart.

Let the Gentleman, whenever he receives his Rents and Revenues, call to Mind the Tribute that he muſt needs pay to Death. Let the Prince and the Lord, when he handles his Royal Patents, and his ancient Charters, or when he examines the Homage and Duties to be paid to his Houſe and Family, take Notice, that he muſt go in Perſon to Heaven's Gates, and pay his Homage to the Divinity. Let the King, who ſits in his Seat of Juſtice, or Chair of State, think upon the Throne of the King of Kings, before which he muſt appear, as well as the moſt wretched Slave, and the meaneſt of his Subjects; and that he muſt be accountable to a juſt God, who is no Reſpecter of Perſons.

Let the Miniſter never be employed about the Duties of his Function, but let him long and wiſh for that happy Day, in which the Lamb ſhall inſtruct and feed him in Perſon, and lead him to the Fountain of living Water.

Let the Chriſtian Soldier engrave upon his Sword this Sentence of *Job*, *Is there not, as it were, a Warfare appointed for all Mortals upon Earth?* Job vii. And, inſtead of thirſting after Human Blood, let him prepare to encounter Death itſelf.

Let the Huſbandman, whenever he ſows his Seed, or when he reaps the Corn of his Fields, be mindful of the Seaſon that comes on a-pace, in which his Body muſt rot in the Earth, that it may grow up to Eternity. Let him meditate upon what St. *Paul* ſaith, *O Fool, that which thou ſoweſt is not quickened, except it die*, 1 Cor. xv. And let him meditate upon *David's* comfortable Perſuaſion, *They who ſow in Tears, ſhall reap with Songs of Triumph.* Let

Let any Handicrafts-man, that works in his Shop, imprint in his Mind this excellent Sentence, *Our Days are like the Days of an Hireling*; and when he hath ended his Taſk, and is departing to his Reſt, let him comfort himſelf with this Aſſurance, that as ſoon as he ſhall have ended that Work that God hath given him to do, he ſhall reſt from all his Labours, *Job* vii.

Whenever the Phyſician viſits the Patient, or when the Surgeon dreſſes the Wounds, let them conſider that they have no Secret or Art able to protect them from Death, or to cure the Breaches that it makes in our corruptible Nature.

Let the moſt cunning Lawyers, the moſt adviſed Counſellors, and the moſt eloquent Orators, remember, that all their *Rhetorick* and Subtlety will never obtain for them their Suit againſt Death, nor procure a Moment of Reſpite or Delay.

And let the moſt learned Philoſophers learn, *That the ſoundeſt Philoſophy is the Meditation of Death.*

In ſhort, whatever be our Employment, Condition, or Age, let us lift up our Minds and Hands unto God to ſpeak to him in the Language of the Prophet *David*; *Lord let me know my End, and the Number of my Days, that I may know how long I am to live*; or of *Moſes*, *So teach us the Number of our Days, that we may apply our Hearts unto Wiſdom.*

A Prayer and Meditation on our Mortality.

O My God, and heavenly Father, ſince it is thy Pleaſure that I ſhould be mortal, and that my Body ſhould return to the Duſt; grant me Grace to be always mindful of my frail Condition, and ſeriouſly to reflect upon the ſeveral Changes of Times, the Variety of Seaſons, the Inconſtancy of the World, and Alterations I meet with, as Mementoes *of my laſt Change and Departure. Let my Infirmities and frequent Diſtempers be looked upon as ſo many Meſſengers ſent to ſummon and warn me,*

that I must shortly leave this Tabernacle. Let the Bed I rest on call to my Mind, that when all the Business of my Life shall be finished, I must lie down and rest in a Bed of Dust. Let the Garments that I cast off at Night, the Sleep that benumbs my Senses, the Tombs of my Predecessors, Forefathers, and Friends, refresh in me the Thoughts of my Departure to my last Home. Gracious God, give me Grace so often to look upon Death and the Grave, that I may be acquainted with them, and that they may not fright or terrify, but Comfort me; for tho' I know that I am born to die, I know also this, that Death shall introduce me into the Presence of my God, the only Author of Life and Happiness, to live for ever with him in Bliss. Amen.

CHAP. VIII.

The second Remedy against the Fears of Death, is to expect it every Moment.

IT is not sufficient to think often upon Death, and to discourse of it in a pathetick Manner; and there be some that frequently mention Death with many pious Reflections; yet nevertheless they cannot boast of being free from all Apprehensions of it. Their Tongue is always ready to speak of Death, but their Heart cannot yet yield to expect it. They know that Death will seize upon them, but they entertain this dangerous Opinion, that the Time is not yet come; they acknowledge that they are indebted to God and Nature, but they delay the Payment of the Debt from Day to Day, as if they were able to corrupt the Serjeants of Death, and obtain a Reprieve at their Pleasure. There is no Man so old and decrepit, but flatters himself with the Fancy of having as yet, at least a Year to live in the World. In short, we imagine always that we perceive Death at a vast Distance from us, and that we shall, at our Leisure, prepare ourselves to receive it as we ought. Therefore, whenever or where-

ever

ever it comes to drag us out of the World, it ſurprizeth and aſtoniſheth us.

To prevent this Miſchief, we muſt not only conſider that we are mortal, but that our Life is ſhort, and of no long Continuance; we muſt continually ſay with *Job, Are not my Days few?* Job x. and imprint in our Minds this Sentence of *David's, The Lord hath made my Days as an Hand-breath, mine Age is as nothing before him*, Pſal. xxxix. Or that of *Moſes, The beſt of our Days are but Labour and Sorrow; for they are ſoon cut off, and we flee away*, Pſal. xc.

The Ancients painted *Time*, with Wings, to expreſs its unavoidable Swiftneſs. The Holy Spirit compares our Life to a Weaver's Shuttle, to an hired Servant, to a Poſt that runs a-pace, to a Packet-boat, or to an Eagle that flies after his Prey. The ſacred Writers ſpeak of our Life as of a Torrent of Waters, of a Cloud, a Vapour, a Wind, or a Breath. They tell us, that our Days are gone as a Dream, they fly away as a Shadow, they vaniſh as a Word in the Air, and that they periſh as a Thought. In a Word, all the lighteſt and the moſt unconſtant Things in the World, whereof the Motion is very ſudden and quick, are employed, in holy Scripture, to expreſs the Vanity of our Life, and Shortneſs of our Days.

Beſides that our Life is of a ſhort Continuance, it ſlides away inſenſibly, like a Clock; the Wheels move without ceaſing, altho' the Hand appears to us to be ſteady; or to a Plant that grows continually, although the Increaſe and Growth is not to be diſcerned by our Eye-ſight; or like to a Man who ſtands in a Ship under Sail, he goes forward, whether he will or no. Thus, whether we ſleep or wake, whether we go or lie down, whether we eat or faſt, whether we work or reſt, we proceed on continually forward towards our Grave. Our Body is like to a Tree eaten continually by Worms; for Day and Night they feed upon it without Intermiſſion. In vain do you baniſh

out of your Minds the Thought of Death; if ye will not call it to your Remembrance, it will not fail to mind and remember you. The more you fly from it, the more it follows and purſues you at the Heels; and when you imagine Death to be fartheſt off from you, it is the neareſt to you.

As the Cancer, when it infects and enters into the Breaſt, devours the Fleſh without Interruption, ſo *Time* conſumes and devours us continually. The Meat that we ſwallow, and nouriſhes us, brings us by Degrees into the Embraces of Death, as the Oil that cauſeth a Lamp to burn, brings it to its End; or as when a Torch is lighted it begins to decay, as ſoon as it begins to burn; this I may ſay without Miſtake, that the very firſt Moment of this Animal Life is the firſt Moment of our Death: And as we ſay of all ſublunary Bodies, that the Generation of the one is the Deſtruction of the other; ſo it is with *Time*, the Birth of one Hour, of a Day, of a Week, of a Month, of a Year, is the End of that which precedes. It is like a Wheel that mounts to no other End but to fall down again.

Since therefore our Life is nothing elſe but a continued Death in proper Terms, we are miſtaken to name only the Moment of the Separation of the Soul and Body the Hour of Death: For as, when many Cannon-Shot are charged againſt a Caſtle to open a Breach, we do not ſay that the laſt hath done the Work; or as, when a hard Stone is cut with a Chiſel and Hammer, or inſenſibly carved and undermined with Water, the laſt Blow or Drop don't carry away alone the Glory of the Performance; thus, when our Bodies decay and crumble away to Duſt, we muſt not only conſider the laſt Strugglings againſt Death, or the laſt Attempt of this Enemy. Of a Ladder, where we aſcend and deſcend, we view every Step from the Top to the Bottom; of an Hour-glaſs, we look to every Grain of Sand; of a Journey we reckon the firſt League as well as the laſt: and in a Race, we take Notice of the firſt Step that we go out, as well as that when we ſtopped:

Thus

Thus we muſt reckon our Death to begin from the firſt Moment that we drew our Breath until the laſt when we yield up the Ghoſt.

Beſides what happens every Moment to this poor and deſpicable Nature, an infinite Number of ſtrange, unlucky, and unexpected Accidents ſtop and ſhorten our Race. The Taper is not always conſumed by its own Flame; many unkind Blaſts and Showers extinguiſh it. If our Life is ſhort, it is no leſs weak and uncertain. The Body in which we lead a languiſhing Life is like *Jonah's* Gourd; for if it be but moved with a contrary and unwholeſome Wind, or touched by an unhappy Worm, it withers upon a ſudden, *Job* iv. This was the Thought of *Eliphaz*, when he ſaid, *We dwell in Houſes of Clay, our Foundation is in the Duſt, we are cruſhed before the Moth*, Job iv. When God intends to deſtroy Mankind in his Wrath, and kill Multitudes in his Diſpleaſure, he doth not always commiſſion an Angel as his Agent, as in the Caſe of the Firſt-born of *Egypt*; as when he ſtretched forth the Sword of his Vengeance upon *Jeruſalem*, and as when he cut off *Sennacherib's* Army in one Night, one hundred fourſcore and five thouſand Men. He doth not always let looſe the wicked Spirits, as when he gave them Leave to raiſe a furious Tempeſt, which caſt to the Ground the Houſe where *Job's* Children were buried in the Ruins, *Job* i. He opens not always the Fountains of Heaven, as when he waſhed away the firſt wicked World with a fearful Deluge, *Gen* vii. He cauſeth not always Fire and Brimſtone to rain from Heaven, as upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, upon *Admah* and *Zeboim*. He works not always Miracles in the Waters, as when he drowned *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptian* Hoſt in the Waters of the *Red Sea*. He prepares not always Whales to devour us, as he did *Jonah*. He ſends not always burning Serpents, as to the murmuring Generation of the *Iſraelites* in the Deſarts. He commands not always the Earth to open and ſwallow us up, as he did *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*. He ſends not always from above great Hailſtones, as when

he knocked down the *Amorites*; he deſtroys not always by Flames, that proceed from his Preſence, as he did *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who offered unhallowed Fire upon his Altar. He commands not always the Lions and Bears of the Foreſt to iſſue out and devour us, as he did when the rebellious Prophet was killed and when the ill-tutored Children of *Bethel* mocked *Eliſha*. In ſhort, God employs not always the Plagues and Judgements of Peſtilence, of War, and of Famine; the unpleaſant Smell of a fuming Snuff, a flying Vapour of a malignant Smoak, is able to choak us, or kill us in a Moment; a Fly, the Kernel of an Apple, the Hair of the Head, or the Seed of a Grape, or Aſhes, or Sand, or ſome other Atom, may ſtop the Breath of our Life. Therefore God adviſeth us by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Ceaſe ye from Man, whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Iſa. ii.

It is to be conſidered, that theſe Contingencies happen very frequently, and in every Place Death lays for us his Snares, as well in the Boſom of our tender-hearted Parents, and in the Embraces of our deareſt Friends, as amongſt our moſt mortal Enemies. Its inviſible Darts fly every-where, and, as the Pſalmiſt informs us, *The Peſtilence walketh in Darkneſs, and Deſtruction waſteth at Noon-day*, Pſal. xci. Death is buſy on the ſolemn Feſtivals, as well as on the Working-days; it drags us as eaſily from the Table where we take our Delights, as from the Bed of Sorrow, where we ſigh and groan. There is no ſecret Retreat where we may find a Refuge; it hath no more Regard of the Temples dedicated to God's Service than of the common Houſes. All the Riches of *America*, and the Power of the greateſt Monarch, are not able to protect us from its Purſuits; it requires a preſent Payment of the Debts that we owe, that it is not poſſible to appear by Deputy at the Summons that it ſends to us.

Death claps the Summons on the Poſt of the Door, it truſts them not in the Hands of the Meſſengers or Lacquies; there is no Warning, but it may write down

down upon it theſe Words, *ſpeaking to him in Priſon.* It ſurpriſes us at Home and Abroad, in our Cloſets, and in the Street, in our Beds, in our Sedans, in the Midſt of our Feaſts, and all our Pomps. It offers Violence to the ſacred Perſons of the greateſt Kings in their moſt ſumptuous Palaces, in their moſt flouriſhing Cities, in their ſtrongeſt Fortifications, in the Midſt of their moſt faithful Subjects, and moſt victorious Armies; upon their Thrones, and in their triumphant Chariots. As King *Ahab*, when he was going to take Poſſeſſion of *Naboth's* Vineyard, told the Prophet *Elijah* in a Rage, *Haſt thou found me, O mine Enemy?* 1 Kings xxi. Thus when the profane Worldlings dream of nothing but the pleaſant Enjoyment of their unjuſt Poſſeſſions and ſwimming in the Blood and Sweat of the meaner People, they meet unexpected Death, which they curſe in their Hearts; and if it did not ſtop their Mouths, they would ſay alſo in a Rage, *Haſt thou found me, O mine Enemy?*

This holy Meditation cauſeth the beſt King upon Earth to tell us, *Man knoweth not his Time; as the Fiſhes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in a Snare, ſo are the Sons of Men ſnared in an evil Time, when it falls ſuddenly upon them,* Eccleſ. ix. 12. This ſame Conſideration cauſed this excellent Sentence to be written in the Book of *Job*; *In a Moment they ſhall die, and the People ſhall be troubled at Midnight, and paſs away, and the Mighty ſhall be taken without Hand,* Job xxxiv. that is, that to deſtroy Kingdoms and whole Nations, and to carry away the moſt luſty and mighty Men, Death has no need of any other Aſſiſtance but its own Arm.

Do you deſire, Chriſtian Reader, to underſtand the Reſult of this Diſcourſe? Let me tell you, that ſince Death is certain, and not to be avoided, and that there is nothing ſo uncertain as the Hour of its Arrival, we ought ſo to live, as if we were to breathe forth the laſt Gaſp at every Moment. We ſhould behave ourſelves as if we had always our Souls upon our Lips,

ready

ready to yield them into the Hands of our great Creator, and to speak in *Job's* Language, *Having our Flesh between our Teeth, and our Souls in our Hands*, Job xiii. In regard we know not at what Time, nor in what Place Death intends to come upon us, let us expect it at every Moment, and in every Place; and as we lodge in this *earthly Tabernacle*, without any Term prefixed, let us be ready to depart at the first Warning: For it will be far better for us to go out willingly, than to be dragged out against our Will. It is not convenient that Death should carry us away in the same manner as the Sea beats and tosses a dead Corpse upon its Waves: But we must on this Occasion imitate the discreet Mariner, that trims his Sails, and helps by his Art the Winds and the Tide to carry him to his desired Haven. We should not follow Death, as the Malefactor follows the Executioner, who drags him to suffer; but as the Child follows his Father, who conducts him to a Feast. We should not engage in a Combat with Death by Constraint, as the ancient Slaves with the wild Beasts in the *Roman Amphitheatres*; but we should imitate *David's* Courage, who of his own Accord marched out of the Camp of *Israel* to fight with *Goliath*: It is better for us to attack and seize upon Death, than to be surprized and devoured by it unawares.

Come when thou wilt, O Death! thou shalt never surprize me; for I wait for thee at every Moment, with my Weapons ready in my Hand. Thou shalt never drag me forcibly; for I will follow thee wilfully and joyfully. Though thou art my Enemy, yet will I speak to thee in the Language of the Spouse in the *Canticles* to her Beloved, *Draw me, and I will run after thee.* Nay, I will meet thee in the Way, and receive thee with hearty Embraces; for instead of dreading thy Coming, I desire it passionately, and hope for it; for at the first Arrival, as soon as I have seen thee, I shall overcome thee, O blessed and happy Day, that promiseth me such a glorious Victory, and such an eternal Triumph!

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation upon the Continual Expectation of Death.

O Gracious God, in whoſe Power alone, and at whoſe Pleaſure, are the Times and Seaſons; I know it is appointed for all Men once to die, and that the Grave is the Dwelling which thou haſt prepared to receive all Mankind. We underſtand ſufficiently, by the Experience of former Ages, that none is able to ſay, I ſhall live, and ſhall not ſee Death. *Thou, O Almighty God, our ſupreme Judge, haſt pronounced our irrevocable Sentence in the Earthly Paradiſe, that we muſt die; ſo that I ſhould be guilty of the greateſt Folly, if I did not firmly believe that I muſt die as others, and follow at my Turn in the Way of all Fleſh. But, Lord, thou haſt been pleaſed to hide from us the Iſſues of thy Providence, and doſt not ſuffer us to ſee the Hand that marks out the laſt Hours of our Life. We can perceive no Shadow to diſcover to us, with Certainty, what ſhall be the Going-down of our Sun; we know not at what Hour of the Day, or of the Night, thou wilt call us to appear before thy great Tribunal. Give me therefore Grace, O moſt merciful God, to be always ready to anſwer to thy Call, and to obey thy holy Commands; that I may be as a Ship at Anchor, that ſtays only for a Wind to ſet Sail; or as a Soldier, who waits only for a Signal to march to the Encounter. Give me Grace, O good Lord, that I may be like the good and faithful Servant, who expects his Maſter's coming, and hears his Voice as ſoon as he calls; or like the wiſe Virgins, who are ready to meet the Bridegroom, and to follow him to the Marriage Chamber. Since I am not to know either the Time or the Place when Death will come to me, O that I may expect and wait for it every Moment, and at every Place! O that I might live in ſuch a Manner, that I may be always ready to die! that my Soul were always upon my Lips, prepared to fly away! that I were continually in Readineſs to commit it into thy Hands, O my God, my faithful and merciful Creator! By this*

this Means I ſhall receive Death with Joy, when it comes as thy Servant and Meſſenger; and I ſhall follow it willingly, being certainly perſuaded that it will lead me into eternal Life, and tranſport me into thy glorious and immortal Palace. Amen.

CHAP IX.

The Third Remedy againſt the Fears of Death, is to conſider that GOD *hath appointed the Time and Manner of Death.*

WE are either Hypocrites, who draw near unto God with our Lips, and honour him with our Tongues, whilſt our Heart is far from him, *Mat.* xiv. or we muſt deſire the Accompliſhment of the Will of God, and reſign ourſelves wholly to it; for every Day we ſay to him in our Prayers, *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*; therefore we cannot abhor nor fly from Death ſo cowardly, if we be rightly perſuaded, as we ought, that God hath limited the Time, and appointed the Manner of our Death. That which cauſes us to complain of this laſt Enemy, is a continual Eye that we have fixed upon the Power of the Fleſh, and a too great Confidence upon ſecond Cauſes. We are like the Dog that bites at the Stone that ſtrikes him; for we commonly curſe the Means that God employs to call and withdraw us out of the World.

It will eaſily appear that God hath numbered our Days, and that by his wonderful and eternal Wiſdom, he hath decreed the Hour and Moment of every Man's Death; for, beſides what our Saviour *Chriſt* ſaith in general, *That God hath reſerved the Times and the Seaſons in his own Power*, Acts i. *Job* tells us expreſly, *The Days of Man are determined, the Number of his Months are with thee, thou haſt appointed his Bounds that he cannot paſs*, Job xiv. The Royal Prophet ſpeaks to the ſame Purpoſe in the xxxiſt *Pſalm, I truſt in thee, O Lord,*

O *Lord*; *I ſaid, Thou art my God, my Times are in thy Hand.* He is of the ſame Judgment in the xxxixth *Pſ. Behold, thou haſt made my Days as an Hand-breadth.* And *Pſ.* lxviii. *Unto God the Lord belong the Iſſues of Death.* He alſo teacheth us the ſame Leſſon in his divine Hymn, *Pſ.* xc. for when he had repreſented how that it is God that reduceth Man to Aſhes, and maketh him return to his firſt Subſtance, he tells us, ſpeaking unto God, *Thou turneſt Man to Deſtruction, and ſayeſt, Return again, ye Children of Men.*

King *Hezekiah's* Compariſon is very notable; he compareth the Life of Man to a Thread that God hath twiſted, and that he cuts off at his Pleaſure, *Iſa.* xxxviii. *Mine Age is departed, and removed from me as a Shepherd's Tent*; *I have cut off, like a Weaver, my Life*; *he will cut me off with pining Sickneſs*; *from Day even to Night wilt thou make an End of me. Hannah, Samuel's* Mother, removes all Difficulty, and confirms this Truth ſufficiently, 1 *Sam.* ii. 2. *It is God*, ſaid ſhe, *who killeth and maketh alive*; *he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.* There is nothing more ſignificant to the ſame Purpoſe, than our Lord and Saviour's Words, *I am he that liveth, and was dead*; *and behold I am alive for evermore*, Amen, *and have the Keys of Hell and Death*, Rev. i. This great God and Saviour cloſeth the Gates of the Grave when he pleaſeth, and it is not poſſible to open them againſt his Will. In ſhort, *Whether we live, we live to the Lord*; *or whether we die, we die to the Lord*; *whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's*, Rom. xiv.

And our Reaſon being enlightened with divine Revelation, teacheth us this good and profitable Leſſon; for if God hath a Hand in our Conception and Birth, and if he appoints the Time of our Entrance into the World, wherefore ſhould not he alſo have a Hand in our Death, and mark out the Time of our Departure? *David* ſpeaks thus to God in *Pſ.* cxxxix. *My Subſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt Part of the Earth: Thine*

Eyes did ſee my Subſtance yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my Members are written, which in Continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there were none of them. We may therefore ſpeak unto God in the ſame Language: My Subſtance ſhall not be hid from thee, when this miſerable Body ſhall fall to pieces, as rotten Wood, and as a Moth-eaten Garment; thine Eyes ſhall ſee me, when Death ſhall cut off the Thread of my Life, and ſeparate what thou haſt joined together ſo wonderfully by thy Power and Wiſdom; thy Providence ſhall diſpoſe of me at my Departure, and nothing ſhall happen to me but that which thou haſt foreordained in thine unſearchable Decrees.

If God appoints the Time of our *Reſurrection*, and if it be certain, that without his expreſs Commiſſion the Holy Spirit will not breathe upon our dry Bones to cauſe them to revive; it is not probable that our Bodies ſhall fall into the Bed of Corruption, without the Orders of the great and living God, *Ezek.* xxxvii. He hath appointed the Sun its Courſe, and to the Stars that ſhine in the Heavens, their ſeveral Motions and Stations, *Iſa.* xl. And ſhould he not alſo appoint to his Children their Motions, ſince they are to ſhine for ever in the Heaven of Heavens, where Righteouſneſs dwells, as ſo many immortal Stars? He hath meaſured the Water in his Hand; he hath compaſſed the Heavens with his Span; he hath weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills with a Balance; he hath faſhioned the Earth with his Hands, and given Bounds to the roaring Sea; and is it poſſible that he hath not meaſured the Time of our Life, and that he hath not marked out with his Finger the laſt Moment? He who hath numbered the Kingdoms of the Heathen Princes, hath he not alſo numbered the Days in which he intends to reign in our Hearts by his Holy Spirit? Hath he not appointed the Time for us to aſcend up into the higheſt Heavens, where we are to reign with him in the Kingdom of his Glory?

If

If it be certain that God hath numbered the Hairs of our Head, *Mat.* x. it is not to be doubted but that he hath alſo numbered the Days of our Life. And if a Sparrow fall not to the Ground without his Order, how can it be that a Man can take his Flight up to Heaven without his expreſs Commiſſion? He bottles up our Tears, he keeps a Record of all our Afflictions, and takes an Account of our Sorrows, *Pſ.* l. and can we imagine that he doth not keep an Account of the Life and Death of Men, and that he minds not the Time that we are to ſpend in the Valley of Tears? He takes Notice of our Riſing, and of our Down-ſitting; he compaſſeth thee round about, whether thou doſt ſtop or go, *Pſ.* lix. And can it be conceived but that he obſerves thy riſing at thy Birth, the ſeveral Paſſages of thy Life, and thy Going-down at thy Death?

In ſhort, if God hath appointed, in his eternal Counſel, the Continuance of the great World; he hath alſo without Doubt, limited the Life of Man, the little World, and the Image and Compendium of the great, as our Lord and Saviour teaches us. Man is not able by his ſolicitous Care to add one Cubit to his Stature, and our Experience ſufficiently demonſtrates, that we cannot add a Year, a Day, or a Moment, by all our Labour and Induſtry, to the Continuance of our Life.

If Life and Death were not in God's Hand, there would be nothing ſettled or conſtant, either in the Kingdoms of the World, or in the Church of *Chriſt*. The Prophets would be often found in grievous Errors, and the eternal Election would be totally aboliſhed; for the moſt weighty Affairs of a Commonwealth depend upon the Life of Princes. The Death of one Man is able to turn an Empire upſide-down, and to change the State of the Kingdom. If *Alexander the Great* had been ſtifled in his Cradle, what would become of the Prophecy of *Daniel*, who declared the glorious Victories that this Prince ſhould obtain againſt King *Darius*, the *Perſian* Monarch, under the Emblem of an He-Goat, that ſhould run at a Ram with all his Might,

that

that should break his two Horns, and trample him under his Feet? And if King *Cyrus* had died before the obtaining the Kingdom of *Babylon*, how should *Isaiah's* Prophecy be accomplished? For he paints out this young Conqueror in the most lively Colours, and calls him by his Name in this Expression; I have said of Cyrus, *He is my Shepherd, and shall perform all my Pleasure, even saying unto* Jerusalem, *Thou shalt be built; and to the Temple, Thy Foundation shall be laid*, Isa. xliv.

If the Devil could have destroyed St. *Paul's* Life, before his Journey to *Damascus*, where he was strangely converted by a Miracle, how could God's immutable Decree be accomplished? For he had designed him, from his Mother's Womb, to be a noble Vessel of his Grace and Mercy, and a *faithful Ambassador of his Son*, Gal. i. If the penitent Thief had died before he had seen the Light, or if he had been killed in one of his Robberies, how could he have been converted upon the Cross, where he repented of his Crimes? Or how could he have heard from our Saviour these blessed and comfortable Words, *Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt be with me this Day in Paradise?* Luke xxiii.

The Heathens have perceived and understood this Truth, but they have darkened and defaced it by their impertinent and ridiculous Fictions: For their Poets tell us there are three *Parcæ*, or infernal Goddesses; the one holds the Distaff, and spins; the other winds up the Thread; the Third cuts it, and puts a period thereby to the Life of Man. By this Fable they intend to teach us, that God lengthens or shortens at his Pleasure Man's Life. As it is therefore certain that God has numbered our Days, he hath also appointed in his infinite Wisdom, the Means to convey us out of the World. If one dies in Peace, another is killed in War; if one departs in his Bed, another is hanged upon a Gibbet; if one perishes with Famine, another is stifled with the Plague; if one is struck with Thunder, the other is torn in Pieces by wild Beasts; if one is choaked in the Waters, the other perishes in the Flames;

in

in ſhort, if the Separation of the Soul from the Body happens in a different Manner, it is not without the expreſs Leave and Orders of our heavenly Father.

Therefore, when we ſee the ſtrangeſt Accidents come to paſs, and the moſt *unexpected tragick Deaths* before our Eyes, we muſt remember the Saying of the Prophet, *Jeremy*, when he ſaw the Burning and Plunder of *Jeruſalem*, *Who is he that ſaith, and it cometh to paſs, when the Lord commandeth it not? Out of the Mouth of the moſt High proceedeth not Evil and Good?* Lam. iii. We muſt then conſider with the Prophet *Iſaiah*, that it is God that creates Light and Darkneſs, and that ſends Proſperity and Adverſity, *Iſa.* xv. 45. or with *Amos*, who enquires whether *there be any Evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Amos iii. That is to ſay, that there is no Affliction nor Death that happens, but God has appointed it, and fore-ordained it by his wiſe Providence. If the Devil cannot deſtroy *Job's* Flock of Sheep, nor hurry headlong into the Sea the Herds of Swine, without his Leave who holds him faſt in Chains, *Mat.* viii. let us perſuade ourſelves, that all the Powers of Hell and the World cannot cauſe us to die by a violent Death, if God hath not ordained it before in the Reſolutions of his infinite Wiſdom: So that, if at any Time a *Prince* or *Magiſtrate* ſpeaks to us in *Pilate's* Language to our Saviour, *Knoweſt thou not, that I have Power to crucify thee, and Power to ſave thee?* John xix. being ſtrengthened with an holy Confidence, let us anſwer him as our Saviour, *Thou couldſt not have that Power over me, if it were not given thee from above.* Without the Leave and the Pleaſure of my God, thou canſt not take from me an Hair of my Head.

We read in the Book of *Judges*, that when *Abimelech* aſſaulted the Tower of *Thebez*, with a Reſolution to win it on a ſudden, a Woman caſt from the Top a Piece of a Mill-ſtone, that fell upon his Head, and brake his Skull, *Judg.* ix. If we look only upon ſecond Cauſes, this Accident may appear to be ſtrange and unexpected; but we muſt lift up our Eyes to the

Almighty Hand of an all-seeing Power and Wisdom, far more dextrous than that of this poor Woman; for the same Relation declares that God by this Means brought to pass *Jotham's* Prophecy, *and rendered the Wickedness of* Abimelech, *which he did unto his Father, in slaying his seventy Brethren with his unmerciful Hand, upon his own guilty Head.*

Ahab King of *Israel* was disguised, with a design to fight with the *Syrians*, 1 Kings xxi. An unknown Soldier lets fly by Chance an Arrow out of his Bow, which struck him in the weakest Part of his Armour, wounded him to Death, and the Dogs licked the Blood that issued out of his Wounds. At this sight a carnal and earthly mind may say, that this was but an Accident of War; but the Spirit of God informs us better, that this happened to fulfil the Prophecy of *Elijah*, and the dreadful Threatnings which he had pronounced against this wicked Prince, who laboured, by tyrannical and deviliſh Means, to invade other Men's Possessions: *Thus saith the Lord, in the Place where Dogs licked up the Blood of* Naboth *shall Dogs lick thy Blood, even thine*, 1 Kings xxi.

When we cast our Eyes upon the tragical Death of *Josias* King of *Judah*; at the first sight it appears but the Effect of the boiling Heat of Youth, which carried him against Reason obstinately to fight with *Pharoah Necho* King of *Egypt*; or of the Strength and Swiftness of his Enemies, according to the Complaint of *Jeremiah*, the Prophet, *Our Persecutors are swifter than the Eagles of the Heaven; they pursued us upon the Mountains, they laid wait for us in the Wilderness; the Breath of our Nostrils, the Anointed of the Lord, was taken in their Pits, of whom we said, Under his Shadow we shall live among the Heathen*, Lam. iv. But to understand the Truth, we must enter farther into the Sanctuary, and adore the Wisdom of God's Decree, that had resolved to take away this good and religious Prince into eternal Rest, and bestow upon him a more noble and richer Crown, before he took in Hand the Sword of Vengeance

to

to puniſh the People of *Iſrael* for the many Idolatries and horrid Crimes of which they had been guilty: By this Means God fulfilled the Prophecy of *Huldah*, *Behold, I will gather unto thee thy Fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered into thy Grave in Peace, and thine Eyes ſhall not ſee all the Evil which I will bring upon this Place*, 2Kings xxii.

When we look upon the Death and Paſſion of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, we may imagine, at the firſt View, that only the *Phariſees* Envy, *Judas's* Treaſon, the Mutiny of the rude Rabble, *Pilate's* injuſtice, *Herod's* Jeſts, and the cruelty of the *Roman* Soldiers, were the Cauſes of this Tragedy: But the holy Apoſtles *Peter* and *John*, unto whom our Saviour had diſcovered the rareſt Secrets of his Wiſdom, conſider the outward Agents but as the Inſtruments to bring God's great Deſign, Man's Redemption, to paſs; therefore it is ſpoken of in this manner, *Acts* iv. *Againſt thine holy Child* Jeſus *whom thou haſt anointed, both* Herod *and* Pontius Pilate, *with the* Gentiles *and the People of* Iſrael, *were gathered together, to do whatſoever thine Hand and thy Counſel determined to be done.*

If it happens that a Friend unadviſedly ſtrikes another; if in a Wood where he is felling Timber, the Head of the Axe ſhould ſlip out of the Handle and kill the deareſt Friend of the Agent; there can be nothing imagined to be more caſual in regard to the ſecond Cauſes, *Exod.* xxi. But God declares in expreſs Terms, that he cauſed ſuch an one to be under the Hand of his Friend who killed him againſt his Will. To ſecure the innocent Author of the unexpected Murder, God appointed Cities of Refuge for ſuch to fly to, *Numb.* xxxv.

As when the Hour of our Death is come, all the Riches of the World cannot pay our Ranſom; all the Wiſdom of the moſt prudent Counſels, or Strength of a Kingdom, are not able to free us from the Power of Death; on the contrary, when it pleaſeth God to ſhelter and preſerve our Life, all the Subtilty and Cunning of the Devil, all the Power and Fury of the World, cannot take it from us.

Eſau, in his Rage, full of Vengeance and Diſpleaſure againſt his Brother, reſolves to kill him. On Purpoſe to accompliſh this cruel Deſign, he goes to meet him with four hundred Men. But God, who holds in his Hand the Hearts of all the Men in the World; God, who turns the ſtony Rocks into Fountains of Water, and the Flints into Rivers of Oil, forced out of this hardened Heart Tears of Compaſſion and Love. The ſame *Eſau*, inſtead of drawing out his Sword againſt his Brother, embraced him with Expreſſions of Kindneſs, kiſſed, and wept over.

Jacob's Sons had wickedly intended to deſtroy their Brother *Joſeph*; they were ready to imbrue their cruel Hands in the Blood of this innocent Lamb; but by a ſecret and wonderful Providence, God ſtopped their helliſh Deſign. This great and ſovereign Monarch of the whole World, who draws Light out of Darkneſs made uſe of the moſt damnable Malice and Hatred, to accompliſh his good Purpoſe, and to raiſe his Servant to a conſiderable Degree of Honour and Glory, which was prepared for him. Theſe inhuman Souls, full of Envy and Diſpleaſure, conſpired together, how to hinder the fulfilling of *Joſeph's* Dream. But, contrary to their Intention, they made way, and were inſtrumental to the Accompliſhment of that which God had revealed to his Prophet: Therefore, when his Brethren were afraid leſt he ſhould revenge himſelf upon them, when he had Power in his Hand, he anſwered them, with an Heart full of Charity and Love, *Am I in the Place of God? As for you, ye thought Evil againſt me; but God meant it unto Good*, Gen. l.

David, a Man after God's own Heart, fell into many fearful Dangers, ſo that he was reduced oftimes to the very Gates of Death; but God preſerved his *Soul from the Grave, his Eyes from Tears, and his Feet from falling*, Pſ. cxvi. In the Wilderneſs of *Maon*, King *Saul* had ſurrounded him with his Men on every Side, ſo that no Help or Succour was to be expected

pected from Man, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. But by a wonderful Providence God delivered him: For when he was ready to be caught, a Meſſenger comes to inform *Saul*, *Make haſte and come, for the* Philiſtines *are entered into thy Land:* So that neither the inhuman Perſecutions of this Tyrant, nor the abominable Plotting of his unnatural Sons, nor the Tumults and Revolts of the People, nor the moſt furious Tempeſts of Hell and the World, have ever been able to extinguiſh his Life before the Time appointed. When he had ſpent all the Days allotted to him by God's good Providence, he fell aſleep, as a Man who lays himſelf down to Reſt quietly, after a long and laborious Taſk.

Queen *Jezebel* was enraged againſt the Prophet *Elijah:* She had ſworn by her Gods that he ſhould ſurely be put to Death; but by a Miracle God kept him out of the bloody Hands of this incarnate Devil, and by another Miracle he preſerved from Famine and Hunger him whom he had before preſerved from *Jezebel's* Sword and Fury; he ſent the Ravens to feed him with Bread and Meat, Morning and Evening; and for his Sake God increaſed the Widow of *Zarepta's* Oil and Meal. When he was ready to be famiſhed in the Wilderneſs, God diſpatched an Angel to him to carry him Meat and Drink. In ſhort, all the Storms that the Devil raiſed againſt him, could not deſtroy his Life; ſo that when God had reſolved to crown his Labours he fetched him away in a Chariot of Fire, and carried him up into Heaven.

The *Syrians* were reſolved to take the Prophet *Eliſha*, becauſe he diſcovered their moſt ſecret Counſels, and fruſtrated all their Deſigns: Therefore they beſieged the Town of *Dothan*, to ſeize upon this Man of God. When his Servant beheld the dreadful Number of Horſes and Chariots, which ſurrounded that weak City, he cried out in a Fright, *Alas, Maſter, what ſhall we do? And he anſwered, Fear not; for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them,* 2 Kings vi. At theſe Words of *Eliſha*,

the Eyes of the poor Man were opened, and he saw an innumerable Company of Chariots of Fire, and Horses of Fire, which God had sent from Heaven to guard his Servant the Prophet.

The *Jews* often plotted against our Saviour *Christ*, and attempted to kill him, *John* x. They came so near to the Execution of their bloody Design, as to take up Stones to cast at him, and knock him down; and to bring him to the Sides of an high Mountain to throw him headlong: But he always escaped out of their Hands, and passed through the Midst of them without any Harm. It was impossible for them to lay hold of him, when they had undertaken and resolved it. The Reason which the Spirit of God gives, is, because that *his Hour was not yet come*, John vii. 18.

The High-Priests and the *Sadducees* were inflamed with a hellish Fury against the holy Apostles; they laid Hands on them, and cast them into the publick Prisons, *Acts* v. But because the Time of their Martyrdom appointed by God was not yet come, he sent his holy Angels to free them from their Chains, and set them at Liberty. When *Herod* saw that the *Jews* thirsted for the Blood of God's Servants the Apostles, *Acts* xii. and that they delighted in their Execution, he cut off the head of *James*; afterwards he took *Peter*, clapped him in Prison, and delivered him to four Quaternions of Soldiers, with Intention to bring him to Execution after the Feast of *Easter*. But the Hour was not yet come, in which his holy Apostle was to be crucified for the Glory of him who was crucified for his Salvation. Therefore the Night immediately before his designed Execution, *Peter* was sleeping between two Soldiers, bound with two Chains, and the Keepers before the Door. On a sudden a great Light shined in the Prison, and the Angel of the Lord came and smote him on the Side, and raised him up, saying, *Arise up quickly*; and his Chains fell from his Hands, and the Angel said unto him, *Gird thyself, and bind on thy Sandals*; and so he did: Then he saith unto him,

him, *Caſt thy Garments about thee and follow me*; and he went out and followed him, and he knew not that it was true which was done by the Angel, but thought he had ſeen a Viſion. But when they were paſt the firſt and ſecond Ward, they came to the Iron Gate, which opened of its own Accord; and when they were paſſed through one Street, the Angel departed from him: Then *Peter*, being come to himſelf ſaid, *Now I know of a Surety, that the Lord hath ſent his Angel and hath delivered me out of the Hands of* Herod, *and from all the Expectation of the People of the* Jews.

In ſhort, when the Hour is not yet come, which God has marked out, and appointed to take unto himſelf his faithful Servants, there is no Miracle ſo great, but he will ſhew it for their Sake; he dries up the Seas, he ſtops the Lions Mouths, he denies to the Fire its uſual Heat, he keeps them alive in the Midſt of the Floods and Flames, in the Whale's Belly, in the fiery Furnaces, and in the deepeſt Gulfs.

If we did but examine the Memorials of our Forefathers, and conſider the Things that we have ſeen with our Eyes, and experienced from our Infancy, we ſhould find, that the Means which God hath employed, and which he does daily employ, for our Deliverance, are no leſs wonderful than thoſe of former Ages. God's Arm is not ſhortened, his almighty Power is not leſſened; he hath yet as much Authority as ever, over Men and Devils; and divine Providence is no leſs watchful for the Preſervation of ſuch as fear and worſhip him. If we had the Eye of the Soul as open as the Eyes of our Body, or if we could but perceive the Things that are of themſelves inviſible, we ſhould ſee, that God looks upon us continually with the Eye of his Love, and of his fatherly Care; and that he covers us with his Hand, as with a Buckler of Proof, againſt all the Darts of the World and of Hell; we ſhould ſee, that we are encompaſſed about with a Wall of Fire, and that the holy Angels

guard us on every Side. We ſhould then acknowledge, that it is God that holdeth our Soul in Life, and ſuffereth not our Feet to be moved, *Pſ.* lx. And we ſhould cry out as *David*, *O God, who is like unto thee? Thou, who haſt ſhewed me great and ſore Troubles, ſhalt quicken me again, and bring me up again from the Depths of the Earth: Thou ſhalt increaſe my Greatneſs, and comfort me on every Side,* Pſal. lxxi.

Although this wholeſome and moſt uſeful Doctrine be plainly taught in holy Writ, and ſufficiently confirmed by ſo many Examples out of the Word of God, ſome there are that oppoſe it with many needleſs Objections.

In the firſt Place, they ſay, That God promiſeth Length of Days to ſuch Children as are obedient to their Fathers and Mothers; from whence they think to infer, that our Life hath no certain Time limited, that it is prolonged, or ſhortened, as we prove obedient or diſobedient to God and his holy Laws. There is no Difficulty to give an anſwer to this Objection.

That in the Language of the Holy Spirit, the Word that ſignifies there to *prolong*, ſignifies not always to make a Thing longer than it was, or ſhould be, but only to make it of a long Continuance. So that God promiſes not here, that the Children who ſhall obey his ſacred Laws, ſhall enjoy a longer Life than otherwiſe it ought to be, but only that he will do them the Favour to let them live long and happy in this World. We may prove this Expoſition by St. *Paul's* Words, who paraphraſes the firſt Commandment of the ſecond Table in this manner: *Children, obey your Fathers and Mothers in the Lord, for it is juſt: Honour thy Father and thy Mother, which is the firſt Commandment with Promiſe, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayeſt live long upon the Earth.* This Promiſe is to be underſtood with ſome Exception; if God ſhould judge it expedient for his Glory, and for the Good of his Children: For there are many pious

and

and obedient Children, whom God withdraws out of the World in the Flower of their Age, to give them an happy Life, which ſhall have no other Limits than Eternity.

In the next Place, they alledge the remarkable Hiſtory of King *Hezekiah*, unto whom *Iſaiah* was ſent with this Meſſage, *Set thine Houſe in Order; for thou ſhalt die and not live.* Nevertheleſs God was intreated by his Prayers and Tears, and prevailed upon to ſuffer him to live longer. Therefore the Prophet told him, that God had added fifteen Years to his Days. To this objection I anſwer;

That, according to the ordinary Courſe of the World, and the Diſpoſition of the natural Cauſes, *Hezekiah* was to die of that Diſeaſe: For the Scripture ſaith expreſly, that *Hezekiah* was ſick unto Death; that is to ſay, that his Diſeaſe was mortal in regard of the ſecond Cauſes, and the ordinary Courſe of Nature. Therefore theſe Words, *Set thine Houſe in Order, for thou ſhalt die, and not live*, ought to be underſtood with this Exception: Thou ſhalt die, if I do not deliver thee by a Miracle, and if I do not employ mine almighty Power to heal thee, and reſtore thee to thy former Health.

This may be alſo underſtood in another Manner; Thou ſhalt die, if thou doſt not repent, and turn unto me with Prayers and Tears. In the ſame Senſe God cauſed it to be proclaimed in the Streets of *Nineveh*, *Within forty Days* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroyed.*

Let not any Man conclude from hence, that *Hezekiah's* Repentance was the Cauſe of the lengthening of his Days, and therefore that it was a Caſualty very uncertain: On the contrary, we may underſtand, that God, who had appointed, by his eternal Decree, that this wiſe and religious Prince ſhould live beyond the Diſpoſition of his Body, had alſo reſolved to draw from his Heart Sighs and Groans, and Tears from his Eyes: For God knew all his Works from Eternity, *Acts* i.

Others

Others argue againſt this Doctrine, more impertinently, That if God had numbered our Days, and preſcribed our Life its Bounds, it is in vain to take ſo much Pains, and make ſo much ado about our Bodies diſtempered with Sickneſs; and that it is to little Purpoſe to adminiſter any Remedy to them, or to pray for the Recovery of their Health. In like Manner, ſuch may affirm, that it is to no Purpoſe to eat or drink, and to hinder mad Perſons from caſting themſelves down a Precipice, or from ſwallowing Poiſon, becauſe they ſhall live neither more nor leſs than God has ordained from all Eternity. This Objection may ſeem very plauſible at firſt, although it be moſt abſurd, and ſo fooliſh, that it muſt needs proceed from great Ignorance or Malice; for it is not to be doubted, that when any one aims at an End, he deſigns and ſuppoſes by Conſequence to attain unto it by the ordinary Means. For Example, God had appointed in his eternal Counſel to preſerve *Jacob* and his Family from that Famine which raged the Space of Seven Years: In order to that End, he ſends *Joſeph* into *Egypt*, to gather up Proviſion the ſeven Years of Plenty. *Iſaiah* the Prophet had told *Hezekiah* from God, that he ſhould live the Space of fifteen Years more; therefore he commanded him to apply to this Prince's Sores and Boils a Lump of dried Figs. God had promiſed to *David*, that he ſhould be King over the Houſe of *Iſrael*; to confirm this Promiſe, he had been anointed with Oil, by the Prophet *Samuel*. This Promiſe doth not hinder him from ſeeking the Means to preſerve himſelf from *Saul's* unjuſt Perſecution. And when *Nathan* tells him, that God had promiſed to eſtabliſh his Poſterity upon his Throne after him, this doth not ſtop his Prayers, or cool his Devotion; on the contrary, it was that which quickened him the more, and inflamed his Soul with Love and Thankfulneſs to God; therefore he expreſſeth himſelf in this Manner, *O Lord of Hoſts, God of* Iſrael, *thou haſt revealed to thy Servant, ſaying, I will build thee an Houſe; therefore hath*

hath thy Servant found in his Heart to pray this Prayer unto thee, &c. 2 Sam. vii.

Our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* knew for certain all that ſhould happen to him; nevertheleſs, we find him ſpending the Days and Nights in Prayer; and when his Life was in Danger, he neglected not the lawful and harmleſs Means. He told his Apoſtles, *Are not two Sparrows ſold for a Farthing? And one of them ſhall not fall to the Ground without your Father; but the very Hairs of your Head are numbered.* This Conſideration hinders him not from commanding them, that when they are perſecuted in one City, they ſhould fly to another.

God had appointed to ſave St. *Paul's* Life, and the Lives of all the Company; therefore he revealed it to him by an Angel; nevertheleſs when he ſaw the Mariners ſeek to eſcape, he told the Centurion, *If theſe do not ſtay in the Ship, you cannot be ſaved*, Acts xxvii. In ſhort, the Means and Cauſes are ſubordinate to the End in ſuch a Manner, that it is mere Folly and Extravagancy to offer to divide them, or ſuppoſe them to be contrary.

It is without Reaſon that ſome bring the Hiſtory of King *Aſa* againſt this undoubted Truth. They affirm, that this Prince was reproved for ſeeking to the Phyſicians in his Sickneſs. Theſe are the Words of the holy Scripture; Aſa, *in the thirty-ninth Year of his Reign was diſeaſed in his Feet, until his Diſeaſe was exceeding great; yet in this Diſeaſe he ſought not to the Lord, but to the Phyſicians*, 2 Chron. i. The Spirit of God blames not this Prince, becauſe he deſired the Aſſiſtance of the Phyſicians, but becauſe he neglected to ſeek Help of God, or to implore his Aid in the Day of his Diſtreſs. He that is ſick may as freely take Phyſick, as he that is well may eat and drink; yet we muſt not altogether repoſe our Confidence and Truſt upon the Remedies, but rather upon God, who ſends both Sickneſs and Health. As Man doth not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from the Mouth of God; ſo it is not by the Phyſick alone that the Patient is cured of his Diſtemper, but by the Bleſſing and Power of him who

who gives the Wound, and binds it up; who ſtrikes and heals when he pleaſeth, *Job* v. Therefore as we ought never to eat or drink before we pray to God to vouchſafe his Bleſſing upon our Meat and Drink, that he may grant to them the Virtue of recruiting the decayed Strength of our Bodies; likewiſe we ſhould never take any Phyſick, without lifting up our Hands to God for a Bleſſing, that the Remedy have the Strength to expel our Diſeaſe. All God's Creatures are good, when they are received with Thankſgiving; for they are ſanctified by the Word of God, and by Prayer, 1 *Tim.* iv.

Take Notice here, how much ſuch Perſons are to be blamed, who when they lament for the Loſs of their Friends or Kindred, inſtead of looking up to Heaven, look down upon Earth, and conſider nothing but the exterior Cauſe of their Grief; inſtead of adoring, with all Humility, the wiſe Providence of God, that diſpoſes of all worldly Events, and appoints the meaneſt Circumſtances, they fret and murmur; they delight to nouriſh in their Minds Diſpleaſure, which conſumes them; and break forth into many needleſs Complaints, which ſerve but to open their Wounds, and to render them more miſerable. If it had not been in ſuch a Place, if he had not been engaged in ſuch a Way, if ſuch a Phyſician had not been called, or if another had been ſent; if this or that had not been done, if this Phyſick had not been adminiſtered to him, if leſs or more Blood had been taken from him, if he had been ſuffered to eat more Meat, or if leſs had been given; my Brother or my Siſter, my Wife, my Child, or my Huſband, had been yet alive. It may be, thou art miſtaken, Friend; the Diſeaſe could not be cured but by a Miracle; but when it ſhould be otherwiſe, we muſt nevertheleſs lift up our Eyes to God, and acknowledge his Finger with all Reſpect: For oft-times he blinds the Phyſicians, ſo that they cannot underſtand the Nature of the Diſeaſe, and ſuffers them to apply Remedies contrary to the Diſtemper. As God

threatens to take away the Staff of Bread, that is to ſay, the nouriſhing Strength and Virtue of the Bread, *Lev.* xxvi. likewiſe he takes away his Bleſſing from the moſt ſovereign Remedies, and renders them altogether uſeleſs. It is thus with all other Accidents that happen to us, and that bring us to our Graves; for, when it pleaſeth him to remove any Body out of the World, he ſuffers him to ſhut his Eyes to all the Light of Reaſon and Prudence, and to caſt himſelf headlong into the moſt apparent Danger; as when he deſigned to deſtroy *Abſalom*, and to cut him off, he cauſed him to be led away by evil Counſel, and diſappointed the diſcreet and prudent Advice of *Ahitophel*. Therefore, ſince God hath *appointed*, or *fore-ordained*, before Man's Creation, the Time and Manner of his Death; at what Hour, in what Place, and by what Means ſoever God calls away our Friends, or ſtrikes at our Perſon, it is always our Duty to poſſeſs our Souls with Patience, and not to ſuffer the leaſt repining or deſpairing Word to proceed out of our Mouths.

If Death ſuddenly ſnatch away thy deareſt Children, or thy moſt intimate Friends, complain not of its Inhumanity. Remember that it puts in Execution the Decrees of God's *everlaſting Will*, and that it carries with it a Commiſſion ſealed with the Signet of the *living God*. Adore therefore with all Humility the *Supreme Monarch* of Heaven and Earth, and ſay to him as *David*, with a profound Submiſſion, *Lord, I held my Tongue, and ſaid nothing, becauſe it was thy doing*, Pſ. xxxix.

I do not wiſh thee to have a Heart of Flint, without natural Affection. Piety and Religion are not barbarous, they deprive us not of our Bowels; the Affection that thou bareſt thy Children is not diſpleaſing to the Father of Mercies, if it be but well governed, and do not exceed the natural Bounds. It is lawful for thee to be ſenſible of thy Griefs, to weep for their Diſtempers, and to pray for the Recovery of their Health: But when God hath diſpoſed of them, and received them into his eternal Reſt, thou muſt ſtop

all

all thy Sighs, wipe all thy Tears, and ſay, as *David* did after the Death of his beloved Child, *We ſhall go to them, but they ſhall not come to us*, 2 Sam. xiii.

Do they die of a violent Death? Stop not thy Conſideration at the evil Blaſts that have carried them away, but lift up thy Mind to the great God that draws theſe Winds out of his Treaſures; and being armed with a holy Conſtancy, ſay, with the patient *Job*, *the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* I am but a weak Inſtrument, which God hath employed to put them into the World; but he is their King, their Father, their Creator; he is alſo their Saviour and Redeemer. Now it is both juſt and reaſonable, that God ſhould diſpoſe of his Subjects, of his Children, of his Workmanſhip, and of thoſe whom he hath redeemed with his precious Blood.

The Maſter of a Family gathers at his Pleaſure the Flowers and Fruits of his Garden; ſometimes he cuts off the Buds, ſometimes he ſuffers them to bloſſom, ſometimes he gathers the green Fruit, ſometimes he ſtays till it be ripe; and ſhall not Almighty God have the Liberty to diſpoſe, at his Will, of all that grow in his own Territories? The Maſter of the Family hath not created the Trees and Plants that are at his Command; but God hath made and faſhioned, with his Almighty Hand, all his Children, and all the Men in the World. Our Flowers wither and ſpoil in a Moment, and our Fruits are ſoon rotten, and become unprofitable, notwithſtanding all our Care and Skill to preſerve them; but the Flowers that God cuts or pulls off, he tranſplants into his heavenly Garden, and gives them a perfect and divine Luſtre and Glory, that never fades; and the greateſt Fruits that he gathers, he preſerves for all Eternity in unſpeakable Sweetneſs.

Doth this Death draw near to threaten thy Perſon, when it hath diſpatched thy deareſt Friends? Be not frighted at its Appearance; for it is not able to anticipate a Moment the Hour appointed by the Wiſdom

of

of Almighty God; and when that Moment ſhall be come, that he ſhall call thee to himſelf from Heaven, offer no Reſiſtance, and ſtop not thy Ears at thy Creator's Voice: Say, with the Prophet *Samuel, Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth,* 1 Sam. iii. Exod. xxxiii. O merciful God, ſince thy glorious Preſence goes before me, I am ready to depart out of this crazy Tabernacle, and to quit this miſerable Wilderneſs, to enter into the heavenly and happy *Canaan:* Say, with our Saviour, *Father, the Hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee,* John xvii.

Haſt thou lived many Years upon the Earth? Aſcribe not the Cauſe to the Conſtitution of thy Body, to the Manner of thy Living, nor to the Skill of thy Phyſicians; but remember that God lengthens thy Days, and come and caſt at his Feet thy reverend grey Hairs, which the Holy Scripture ſtyles, *A Crown of Silver, or a Crown of Glory,* Prov. xvi.

Art thou threatened with Death in the Flower of thine Age? Fret not thyſelf at it, and let not the leaſt Word proceed out of thy Mouth, but what is ſeaſoned with the Salt of true Piety. Remember that it is God alone cuts off the Thread of thy Life, and puts a Period to thy mortal Race. Thou haſt as much Reaſon to be grieved becauſe thou art born ſo late, as to be ſorry that thou dieſt ſo ſoon. Inſtead of ſpending thyſelf in uſeleſs Complaints, which is as if thou, who art but an earthly Veſſel newly formed, ſhould caſt thyſelf againſt the Rock of Eternity; remember to adore and praiſe thy *Great Creator,* and return him hearty Thanks, in that he is ſo well pleaſed to crown thee in the Middle of thy Race, and ſo bountiful as to beſtow the Salary of the whole Day upon thee, who haſt laboured but a few Hours. He is very favourable to thee, to tranſplant thee before thou haſt felt the Heat of the Day, and the Scorching of the Sun. Remember that it is the pleaſant Gale of his Divine Mercy, that drives thee ſo faſt into the ſecure Haven of eternal Happineſs. Think not, therefore, that God's

calling thee away in thy Strength, is a Teſtimony of his Diſpleaſure and Hatred; for to haſten and render a Perſon moſt happy, is no Sign of Ill-will. It may be that God calls thee, becauſe he hath found ſome good Thing in thee, as in *Abijah* the Son of *Jeroboam* King of *Iſrael*; becauſe he loves thee dearly, and favours thee, he intends only to remove thee from the approaching Evils, as he did *Joſias*, one of the holieſt and moſt religious Princes that ever reigned; becauſe thou doſt walk before him, and ſeekeſt to pleaſe him, he will take thee up into his holy and heavenly Paradiſe, as he did *Enoch*, for fear that the Temptations of the World ſhould alter thy religious diſpoſition; and for fear that the Enemy of thy Salvation ſhould prevail upon thee, by his continual and wicked Suggeſtions, to leave the Way of Righteouſneſs, in which thou doſt walk at preſent. As there are ſome rich Stuffs, whereof the Aſhes are the moſt precious, and others, whereof the Cinders are good for nothing but to be caſt away; thus there are ſome happy grey Heads, where the rich and precious Relicks of Righteouſneſs and Piety ſhine, whereas others are only fit to diſcover the Follies and Vanities of our Human Nature. As there is ſome Sort of Wine that grows better by old Age, and preſerves its Strength until it comes to the Dregs; whereas other Wine there is, that ſoon becomes ſour and uſeleſs; likewiſe there are ſome Men, whom old Age makes better and wiſer; ſo that they are like to the *Indian* Trees, that yield precious Perfumes and Frankincenſe only when they begin to decline and wither. The old Age of ſuch is moſt honourable, and ſends forth a bleſſed Perfume of Piety; whereas others corrupt with Age, and give out a moſt filthy Stench; under a white Head they hide a black Soul, and wicked Conſcience. In the Decay of their Age, the Vices of their Mind gather Strength and flouriſh. Inſtead of weeping for the Sins of their Youth, they add Sin to Sin, and are more hardened in Evil. Old Age imprints more Furrows

and

and Wrinkles in their malicious Hearts, than it doth upon their Foreheads. Neither Men nor their Lives are to be meaſured by a Yard or an Ell. We muſt not only conſider how long we have lived, but how well we have lived, nd employed the Courſe of this Life; for there are ſome young Men, who have the Wiſdom and Prudence of grey Heads; and there are grey Heads that become as weak as Infants; and ſome that ſcarce go out of that ſimple Age. The firſt are twice Children, the others continue always in their Childhood. Some young Men have performed ſuch brave and glorious Deeds, that one would judge by the Paſſages of their Lives, that they have lived ſeveral Years or Ages. On the contrary, ſome old and decrepit Perſons can ſcarce prove that they have been long in the World, unleſs it be by the Church Regiſter, by their grey Hairs, or by the great number of their Wicked and abominable Actions. This Conſideration cauſeth the Author of the Book of *Wiſdom* to ſay, That *old Age is not the moſt reverend, that can ſhew a Number of Years; but Wiſdom is to be reckoned old Age amongſt Men, and a Life without Spot*, Chap. ix. It is certain he hath lived ſufficiently, who hath learned to live well, and hath prepared himſelf to die well. To what Purpoſe ſhould this miſerable and languiſhing Life be lengthened a few Days? Art thou afraid to be happy too ſoon? And feareſt thou to ſee the End of thy Torments? Doth the Traveller endeavour to lengthen out a painful and dangerous Way? Doth the Workman grieve to have finiſhed betimes his laborious Taſk; Doth the Soldier murmur becauſe he comes off from his Watch and Guard? Miſerable Man! What are all the Years for which thou doſt ſo impatiently afflict thyſelf, and vainly deſire? For a Day with God is as a thouſand Years, and a thouſand Years in his Sight, but as one Day.

He that ſails upon the Sea admires the ſpacious Extent of the Waters, and the Difference of its rolling Waves, that mount up ſometimes to the Clouds, and

then fall down again into a Bottom. And ſuch as travel by Land, are delighted to ſee on one Side deep Valleys, and on the other high Mountains, that reach above the Clouds; but if God had but taken us up into the Seat of his Glory, and that we ſhould from that high Heaven caſt down an Eye upon this contemptible Globe of the Sea and Land, to behold the proud and ſtately Mountains, with the moſt ſwelling Waves, they would appear to us but an even Plain; or rather they would ſeem altogether very little. Thus when we compare the Men of the World the one with the other, we ſhall find that ſome have lived long, and others but a little while; that ſome are old, others young; but in reſpect of God, there is no Difference between the young and the old; between an over-aged *Methuſelah*, who lived Nine hundred threeſcore and nine Years, *Geneſ.* v. and a Child that hath only ſeen the Light of the Living; for the Life of Mankind is but a Moment in Compariſon of Eternity.

If thou art ready to die for Righteouſneſs, of a violent Death, meditate ſeriouſly upon the Saying of the Prophet *David*, Pſal. cxvi. *Precious in the Sight of the Lord is the Death of all his Saints.* Arm thyſelf with an holy Confidence, and ſay with *Eli*, 1 Sam. iii. *It is the Lord; let him do what ſeemeth him good.* Imitate the Generoſity of St. *Paul*, Acts xx. and grave in thine Heart theſe divine expreſſions: *The Holy Ghoſt witneſſeth in every City*, ſaying, *that Bonds and Afflictions abide me; but none of theſe Things move me, neither count I myſelf dear unto myſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my Courſe with Joy, and the Miniſtry which I received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtify the Goſpel of the Grace of God.* Remember always the Prayer that our Lord and Saviour offered up unto God in the greateſt Agony; *O my Father, if this Cup may not paſs away from me, except I drink it, thy Will be done.* Forget not alſo at this Time *Chriſt's* Advertiſement, *He that loveth his Life, ſhall loſe it; and he that hateth his Life in this World, ſhall ſave it to eternal Life*, John xii. O great and glorious Lord

Lord God, the Enemies of thy Truth are met together againſt thy dear Children, whom thou haſt ſanctified by the Blood of the Covenant; but they are not able to do any Thing but what thou haſt appointed to be done in thine eternal Wiſdom.

A Prayer and Meditation upon the Time of Death.

O Merciful Lord, who doſt govern all Things by thine infinite Wiſdom, and haſt reſerved the Times and the Seaſons in thine own Power; thou haſt not only written my Name in the Book of the Living, but haſt alſo meaſured the Length of my Life, and appointed the Hour of my Death. Thou haſt numbered my Days, and preſcribed to me my Bounds, that I cannot paſs beyond them. This miſerable Body is but a weak Tabernacle made up of Earth, ſubject to all manner of Infirmities; nevertheleſs none is able to deſtroy it without thy Divine Aſſiſtance. The ſame Hand that hath faſhioned and formed it, muſt break it in Pieces. If a Sparrow cannot fall to the Ground without thy Permiſſion, it is not poſſible that my Soul ſhould fly away into Heaven, without thy Warrant. My God and Father, give me daily Apprehenſions of Death; but let me reſt upon thee, who doſt kill and give Life, who doſt caſt into the Grave, and fetch from thence again. Let Satan *and all the Enemies of thy Glory lay their Snare for me, they are not able to do any Thing, but what thy Wiſdom hath ordained and appointed before the Foundation of the World; without thy Leave and Permiſſion, they are not able to pluck an Hair from my Head, nor diminiſh a Moment from the Time I am to live in this earthly Tabernacle. O Almighty and moſt merciful God, I recommend to thee my Soul, as to my faithful Creator, and yield it wholly into thine Hands. Here I am to accompliſh thy Will, and to ſubmit myſelf to thy Pleaſure, without any Reſiſtance; whether this Soul,*

which thou hast created after thy Likeness, and which is an Image of thy Divinity, remain in this Body, that I may be able to serve thee on Earth; or whether thou dost call for it, and take it up into Heaven, that it may glorify thee in the Company of thy Saints, and of the Blessed and glorious Angels.

A Prayer and Meditation upon the Manner of our Death.

O God, the Creator of all Flesh, and the Father of the immortal Spirits, I know that every Kind of Death of thy Children is precious in thy Sight, and that howsoever that shall happen, thou wilt take Care of my Soul. When I consider all Things, I find that it matters not whether my Spirit issues out of my Lips, or out of a Wound, so that it enters into thy Glory to enjoy thine eternal Happiness. What matter is it if my Lamp goes out of its own Accord, or if it be blown out by some envious Blast, so that it be lighted again by the immortal Beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and continue for ever glorious in the highest Heavens? I shall be sufficiently happy if I die in thee, Lord, and enter into thine eternal Rest, from all my Labours, in what manner soever Death assaults me. From all Eternity, O Lord, thou knowest all thy Works, and with a Glance of thine Eye thou discoverest the Depths, and seest into an endless Eternity. As thou hast marked out and appointed the Moment of my Death, thou hast also ordained the Manner of it I must, O Almighty God, repose myself upon this wonderful and wise Providence, and be contented with thy uncontroulable Decrees. But, O my God, and heavenly Father, if thou wilt give me the Liberty, who am but Dust and Ashes, to speak to thee, and to lend up the Thoughts of my Heart; I beseech thee to be so gracious, as to let me know my End, that I may not be surprised on a sudden by an unexpected Death, as Job's *Children;*

and

and ſo merciful as to give me timely Notice of my Departure, as thou didſt to thy Servant Hezekiah. *I deſire not the Notice of many Years, but of a few Days, or at leaſt of a few Hours immediately before, that my Soul may not be diſturbed with evil Thoughts, or frighted with falſe Conceits, and malicious Suggeſtions of the Devil; that I may end my Days with all Tranquillity and Satisfaction of Mind; that I may always have a perfect Uſe of my Senſes, of my Reaſon and Underſtanding, and the Aſſiſtance of thy Grace; that I may glorify thy Name, and edify my Neighbours, until the laſt Moment of my Departure. Suffer not therefore my Soul to be ſnatched away by Force on a ſudden, but grant me Time to commit it into thy merciful Hands.* Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for one that dies in a ſtrange Country in the Midſt of Infidels.

O My God and heavenly Father, how grievous is this Trial! Who can expreſs the Troubles of my Mind! At the Moment of my moſt urgent Neceſſity, and of the Oppreſſion of Soul, at the Time of my Agony, I ſee myſelf deſtitute of all human Aſſiſtance. Here I am at a Diſtance not only from my Country, and pleaſant Company of my Friends, and deprived of all ſpiritual Comforts, of which I have, at preſent, greateſt Need in this Extremity; but alſo, to my unſpeakable Grief, here I am in a ſtrange Place, in the Power of my cruel Enemies. I have nobody to ſtrengthen me in the Faith of my Saviour Chriſt. All Things that appear before me, increaſe and add to my Trouble; I am here among the Adverſaries of thy Truth, who labour to deſtroy my Intereſt in Chriſt, *and cauſe me to periſh, now that I am entering to the Haven of Eternity. I muſt encounter with Death, with Hell itſelf, and with the ſubtle Inſinuations of the infernal Spirits. O Almighty and merciful*

ciful Lord, suffer me not to lose my Courage, and to yield to the present Temptation. By thy wonderful Providence, and out of thine abundant Mercy, supply all my Wants and Infirmities, and grant that I may, with the Shield of Faith, quench all the fiery Darts of Satan. *I am beset with many visible and invisible Enemies; but they that are for me, are more in Number than they that are against me. It is true, I am far from Heaven, whereof the Earth is the Centre. I am at a Distance from all my earthly Friends; but nothing can put me at a Distance from thee, O good God, who lovest me with an unchangeable Affection. I am in the Embraces of mine heavenly Father, and of my God: I have not the Assistance of a Minister to help me in my Grief and Pain; but I know that thou wilt send me thine holy Angels, as once to thy beloved Son in his bitter Agony. These Angels shall protect me against all the Powers of the Prince of Darkness: thou wilt administer to me, thyself, the sweet Comforts of thy Salvation; thy Rod and thy Staff will assist me in this Valley and Shadow of Death. O Lord, thou dost Things that are not to be searched out, and so many Wonders, that it is not possible to number them; thy Grace is sufficient for me, and thy Power is made manifest in mine Infirmities. Thy Holy Spirit, who is the true Comforter, and the great Power of the Almighty, shall refresh me in these my Afflictions, and in all Things shall make me more than a Conqueror. Thou art stronger than all other Beings, so that I am persuaded nothing can ravish me out of thine Hands. I am certain, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, can separate us from the Love that thou hast declared to me in* Jesus Christ *my Lord; this precious Faith, with which thou hast strengthened my Soul, shall vanquish the World, triumph over Hell, and destroy Death in its own Empire.* Amen.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation upon the Death of a beloved Perſon.

O My God, I acknowledge that there is nothing certain nor unchangeable on Earth, but thy precious and holy Promiſes; therefore it becomes us to enjoy the Things of the World, as if we enjoyed them not. Thou haſt ſnatched out of my Embraces, and pulled from my Boſom, my greateſt Darling, and moſt intimate Friend. Thou haſt opened my Heart, and torn my Bowels, and thou haſt ſeparated me from myſelf, ſo that my life is but a Burden and Pain to me. I did often look upon this pleaſant object of my Love as a Gift from above, and a Mark of thy Favour and Liberality; it was my greateſt Joy, and my ſweeteſt Comfort. The Day that took it away ovewhelmed me in a Sea of Grief. That which doth moſt diſturb me, is, that I am afraid that this is a Stroke and an Effect of thy Anger and Juſtice. O Lord my God, I muſt needs acknowledge, that I have grievouſly offended thee, ſeeing thou doſt thus chaſtiſe me with ſo much Severity, and makeſt me feel ſo ſharp an Affliction. I am unworthy of all thy Favours, ſeeing thou doſt take from me ſuch a precious Jewel, which was ſhewed to me as Lightning. I am afraid I have been wanting in my Duty, and that this Death that kills me, is the Effect of my Stupidity and Blindneſs: Methinks I could have hindered this doleful Accident; for if I had behaved myſelf otherwiſe than I have done, my Life and Soul ſhould not be in its Grave. O God of all Comfort, pardon my exceſſive Grief, pacify my Sighs, ſtop the Current of my Tears, remove all theſe vain Diſpleaſures that conſume me, deliver my Soul from this unmerciful Grief and Torment that it ſuffers, and from theſe Troubles that are more than human; inſtead of looking to the inferior Cauſes, and to the Circumſtances of the Death of this beloved Perſon, give me Grace to remember, that the leaſt Things, as well as the greateſt, are governed and ruled by thy wiſe Providence, and that the Good and the Evil proceed from

thy divine Appointment. Give me Grace to consider, that thou dost hold in thine almighty Hand the Keys of Life and Death, and thou alone dost cast us in the Grave, and liftest us up from thence again. O Sovereign Monarch of the universal World, who dost not only let Death loose, but also appointest all the Circumstances, make me truly submissive unto thy sacred Pleasure, and to put my Finger upon my Lips, because it is thy doing. If I open them, let it be to adore thy Justice, and sing forth thy Praises. The Person for whom I lament so much, was nearly related to me, like another self, and was also thy Creature, thy Child, and a Member of our Saviour's mystical Body. We, for our Parts, believe we have the Right of disposing of our Workmanship, and of that which we have bought with our Money; and hast not thou, O God, the Liberty to dispose of that which thou hast created after thy Likeness? Bought not with corruptible Things, as with Gold and Silver, but with the precious Blood of the Lamb without Spot or Blemish? Thou hast a Son, who is the Brightness of thy Glory, and the express Image of thy Person, whom thou hast not spared for me; and shall I, Lord, refuse thee my Heart and my Bowels? Thy only-begotten Son came down upon Earth to suffer the most cruel and ignominious Death of the Cross; but thou hast taken up into Heaven the Person whom my Soul loved, to crown him with a glorious and ever happy Immortality. Shall his (or *her*) *Felicity be the cause of my Afflictions? And shall his* (or *her*) *Rest occasion my Displeasure? It is the Property of true Love to prefer the Happiness of the beloved Person to our Satisfaction; therefore our Saviour told his Apostles, If you did love me, you would rejoice, because I go to my Father; for my Father is greater than I. Between thee, O great and living God, and us miserable Worms of the Earth, there is as vast a Difference, as there is between the innocent and harmless Delights of this World, and the unspeakable Pleasures of thy Presence: For these are but as Drops of Water, that are dried up with the least Wind; whereas the Satisfactions of Heaven are like a bottomless Sea of Delights, in which we shall swim for ever. Do I there-*

therefore weep for him (or *for her*) *whoſe Tears thou haſt wiped away? Do I wear a mournful Apparel, and black Scarf, for him who is now covered with a glorious Attire of Joy and Gladneſs, who is adorned with an Habit as white as Snow? Do I delight myſelf in Darkneſs, and doth he ſolace himſelf at the Fountain of Light and Glory? Do I ſeek a ſolitary and melancholy Retreat, and doth he rejoice amongſt the Thouſands of Angels, and the glorious Company of Immortal Spirits? I ſigh and groan, and he ſings a new Song, the Song of the Bleſſed, which is always in his Mouth. All my Complaints and Groanings cannot bring him back on Earth; but if that were poſſible, it is not juſt to attempt it; my Kindneſs would be cruel, and my Love muſt be inhuman. How could I reſolve to make him leave the Haven of eternal Felicity, to expoſe him again to the furious Waves and Storms of this troubleſome Sea of the World; to engage him in freſh Encounters, to clothe him with the Rags of Mortality, to take him out of Rivers of Pleaſures, and bring him back again into a Sea of Gall and Bitterneſs, and feed him again with Bread of Affliction? can I be ſo cruel as to wiſh him out of thy Embraces, and the raviſhing Enjoyment of thy Favour and Eternal Life, to deliver him again into the Torments of Mortality? The Shortneſs of this Life minds me of my Departure after him, to the Light of the Living, where we may again enjoy one another. O Lord, truly wonderful, and various in all thy Diſpenſations! it is not only for the Advantage of this happy Creature and thy Glory, that thou haſt taken him into thy Reſt; but for my Good, and the Inſtruction of his ſurviving Friends; to put my obedience and Faith to a Trial, as thou didſt the Father of the Faithful, whoſe Trial was far greater than mine: For thou commandeſt him to ſacrifice his Son with his own Hands; but thou requireſt from me no other Sacrifice, but my Submiſſion to thy Holy Will. I will therefore ſpeak in* Eli's *Language,* It is the Lord, let him do as ſeemeth good; *or as* Job, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord. *Thou haſt taken*

from

from me what I highly valued on Earth, that I might look up to Heaven, whither he is departed from me. Grant me therefore Grace to put an End to all theſe Sighs, Groans, and Tears, and ſpend no longer my Time and my Breath, lamenting the Loſs of my beloved Object; but that I may employ myſelf to prepare for my Removal out of this earthly Tabernacle. Grant that I may imitate the Piety, Zeal, Faith and Conſtancy, and all other Virtues of ſuch as thou haſt admitted into thine Eternal Reſt, and crowned with everlaſting Joy and Happineſs. Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my laſt End be like his. Amen.

CHAP. X.

The fourth Remedy againſt the Fears of Death is to diſengage our Hearts from the World.

THE Children of *Iſrael* decamped from the Wilderneſs with a ready Mind, and went joyfully over the River *Jordan*, when God commanded them ſo to do. The cauſe of their Readineſs was an earneſt Longing for the Land of *Canaan*, and their unſettled Condition in the Wilderneſs, having nothing but Tents to live in. Death is to us the ſame, in regard to our heavenly Paradiſe, as the River *Jordan* was to the Children of *Iſrael*, in reſpect to the promiſed Land. Therefore from hence it appears, that the ſtrongeſt Motive to oblige us to a Reſolution of entering into this Paſſage willingly, is to free ourſelves from all Things which might encumber, ſtop or tie us to the World, and keep ourſelves always in a Readineſs to depart.

For that Purpoſe it is not neceſſary that we ſhould go out of the World, but that the World ſhould be baniſhed and driven out of us, and that we ſhould renounce all Vanities and unruly Affections, ſo that we might be able to ſay with the Apoſtle, *The World is crucified to me, and I am crucified to the World:* For there be many who depart out of this World, but leave their Hearts and moſt tender Affections behind;

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as *Lot's* Wife that went out of *Sodom*, but left there her Treaſures and Delights, her moſt ardent Deſires; as the *Iſraelites*, who, when they went out of *Egypt*, left behind them their curſed Affections, with their Pots of Fleſh and Onions.

The ſame Thing happens to many, who ſeparate themſelves without any Neceſſity from the Acquaintance of Mankind, and who affect a ſtrange and auſtere Kind of Life. They leave the Society of wiſe and virtuous Perſons, and the lawful Uſe of the Bleſſings which Heaven has granted them; and they deprive themſelves of all that deſerve Eſteem, and the Means of glorifying God, and edifying their Neighbours. But many Times they carry with them their Corruption, their Vices, and a Legion of wicked Thoughts, and carnal Deſires. By this Means they give way to the Devil, and expoſe themſelves to all his Temptations; for that wicked Serpent delights rather in the Dens of wild Beaſts, and in the Caves of the Earth, than in the Palaces and Dwellings of Princes and Kings. The moſt abominable Vices creep and breed rather in the Deſerts, and Places of Retreat, than in Publick, and in great Cities that are full of Inhabitants. *Lot* remained chaſte in the moſt abominable City that was in the World; but when he went aſide to the Foot of a Mountain, and into the Cave to dwell, he defiled himſelf with a monſtrous Inceſt. When *Satan* intended to tempt our Saviour *Chriſt*, he carried him into a Deſert, and to the Top of a Mountain. From hence we may learn, that this ſubtle Enemy of Mankind had learnt, by his long Experience, that the Places of Retreat, and the moſt ſolitary, are the fitteſt to lay his Snares. If our Saviour, who was wholly innocent and free from Sin, hath been able to overcome all Manner of Temptations, we are not of the ſame Temper, we are not furniſhed with ſuch Armour as he was, of Proof againſt all the inflamed Darts of the Devil: For our miſerable Fleſh delights in its own Deſtruction, it opens the Ears and the Heart wide to

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the deceitful Promiſes of *Satan*, and ſuffers itſelf to be cheated by his damnable Inchantments. It flatters us, and cauſes us to be lulled aſleep in its Boſom; then, like a treacherous *Dalilah*, it betrays us into the unmerciful Hands of our great Enemy.

Some clothe themſelves with Hair, and wear at their Girdles a knotted Cord, whom the Devil drags to Hell with the invincible Chains of Luſt. Others climb up to the Top of frozen Mountains, and yet their Hearts burn with impure Flames. Some affect a mournful Solitarineſs, whoſe Deſires and Longings are for the World and its Vanities. Others have their Hands lifted up to Heaven, whoſe Minds are enſlaved to the Earth, and rooted in the rotten and filthy Pleaſures of the Age. Some have a Lamp burning before them, whoſe Underſtanding is wrapped in groſs Darkneſs, more palpable than that of *Egypt*. Others have an empty Stomach, whoſe Soul is full of abominable Paſſions. In ſhort, ſome live in Appearance like Angels, and yet are poſſeſſed with Legions of infernal Spirits. Others ſeem to have no Concernment in the World, and yet lodge the whole World in their Hearts.

Under a coarſe Habit, dwells oft-times more Envy, more Vanity and Ambition, than under the glorious Attire of Silk and Gold. Through a torn Habit, ſome Souls may be perceived ſwelled with Pride and Arrogance: And in Company of Beggars are to be found many Times the Deſigns of Kings, and the lofty thoughrs of the greateſt Monarchs. To ſpeak plainly, the good Things and Advantages of this Life do not ſtop and wed us of themſelves to this World, but rather that Love and Affection which we bear to them.

For without Doubt, there be many that are more earneſt and affectionate for the Things they want, than others that enjoy them. Some poor People have a far greater Longing for Riches, than ever *Solomon* had in the Midſt of all his great Treaſures. Some ſilly Women, who are covered with old Rags, and ſome contemptible

temptible *Joans*, have more Vanity and Pride in their Brains, than ever had Queen *Eſther* in her richeſt and moſt glorious Attire. The Prophet *Daniel* was raiſed to an high and eminent Honour; for he was the Governor of the third Part of the Monarchy of the *Perſians*, and of the *Medes*; nevertheleſs, he was no more concerned in *Babylon*, than if he had had there but a Sepulchre, and worn the Chains of a Slave; he ſends forth as many Sighs, and pours as many Tears, as if he had been ſitting upon the Aſhes of *Jeruſalem*.

Some pitiful Beggars are more loth to quit their Rags, than ſovereign Princes to lay down the Enſigns of their Dignity and Honour. Such are more enſlaved to their Filth and Eaſineſs, than the greateſt Monarchs to the Glory and Splendour of their Empire. Death labours as much to free a Man from his Priſon, and take him out of his Dungeon, as to drive him out of his Palace, and to tumble him from his Throne; the Poor and the Indigent, who have no other Bed to lie upon than the hard Ground, make as much Reſiſtance as the Rich, who are ſtretched upon the ſofteſt Couches: The Galley-ſlaves are as unwilling that Death ſhould looſe them from their Chains, and take them out of their Miſery, as the Kings and Princes are to leave their Sceptres and their Crowns. I am fully perſuaded, that *David* was more willing to go from his Command, and from his Riches, than many poor Wretches are to depart from their Dunghills, and their Meanneſs. Some Perſons are tormented with the Gout, the Stone, and other grievous and ſenſible Pains; they deſire nevertheleſs more paſſionately to live, than many who enjoy a perfect and flouriſhing Health. Carnal and earthly Souls are ſo much wedded to the Earth, that they feel a great Reluctancy, and an unſpeakable Diſpleaſure, when they are to depart from a Body rotten and falling to pieces with old Age; whereas others, who are moſt ſpiritualized, and that have taſted of the heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come, depart moſt willingly

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out of young and lusty Bodies, flourishing in their Strength and Beauty.

We must not therefore remove out of the World our Legs and Arms, but our Affections and vain Lusts. If God bestows upon us his earthly Blessings, we are not to follow the Example of that extravagant Philosopher, who cast into the Sea his Silver, and his precious Stones, that he might not have the Trouble to keep them; and who lost them willingly, that he might not be in any further Danger of losing them afterwards: But we must take heed, that they cause not our Faith to make Shipwreck, and that we regard them not more than our Consciences; for the Soul is a far more precious Jewel than the Body, and Life is far more considerable than Clothing. Seeing that God bestows upon us so many good Things, with an intent that we should enjoy them, we should shew ourselves unthankful to his Goodness, contrary to the wise Providence, and unjust and cruel to ourselves, to refuse the Means of ever using and employing these Blessings. All God's Creatures are good, and none are to be rejected, but received with Thanksgiving; for they are sanctified by the Word of God, and by Prayer.

The Honour and Riches derived to us from our Birth, or that we obtain by lawful and just Means, are to be ranked among the Blessings of God. Therefore *Esther*, who was but a poor Stranger, received with Joy, as a Favour from Heaven, the Imperial Crown that was put upon her Head, and refused not to be the Wife of the greatest Monarch of that Time. *Joseph* accepted willingly the Power and Dignity with which King *Pharaoh* had invested him; and the Prophet *Daniel* did not only take the honourable Commands which were bestowed upon him by the King of *Babylon*, but he employed his Power and Credit to raise also his Companions to Places of Trust, and to the Government of that Empire. God sometimes gives Sceptres into the Hands of cruel and prophane Persons; such as were *Pharaoh*, *Ahab*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Bel-*

ſhazzar and *Herod*, to teach us, that it is not the chief Good of Man, and that we muſt aim at a more excellent Kingdom, and at more ſolid and conſtant Felicities. He alſo places upon the Throne Men according to his own Heart, whom he cheriſhes as the Apple of his Eye, as *David*, *Solomon*, *Jehoſhaphat*, *Hezekiah*, and *Joſias*, to teach us that the Fear of God, and the Expectation of an immortal Crown, is not inconſiſtent with the Honours of this Life, nor with worldly Glory: *For true Piety hath the Promiſes of this Life, and that which is to come.*

The Riches of the Earth are no more hurtful than the Honours and Dignities, unleſs it be by Accident; they are very uſeful and advantageous to ſuch as employ them well, and diſpoſe of them with religious Diſcretion. They are powerful Helps to true Piety, and excellent Means to glorify God, and to exerciſe our Mercy and Compaſſion: I may ſay, that they give a Luſtre to the Zeal and Charity of God's Children. Riches turn to Evils, and are ill beſtowed in the Hand of a brute and ſordid *Nabal*; at the Diſpoſition of a mercileſs and voluptuous Glutton, as in the Goſpel, of a perfidious and treacherous *Judas*, of a ſilly and debauched Youth, as the prodigal Son: But they are the Bleſſings of Heaven when they fall into the Hand of a *Joſeph*, who nouriſhed therewith his Father, and all his Kindred; into the Hands of a *David*, that employed them in Offerings to Almighty God in the Sight of the People; of a *Solomon*, who built a magnificent Temple; and of a *Mary Magdalen*, who ſpent them not in Luxury and Vanity, nor in curious Trinkets, but to buy a Box full of precious Ointment, which ſhe poured on the Head of the Saviour of the World. Theſe are Bleſſings indeed, when ſuch an one enjoys them as *Cornelius* the Centurion, who employed them in Alms, whereof the Perfume aſcended up to the Throne of the God of Mercies. In ſhort, our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, who is the eternal Wiſdom of the Father, hath uttered out of his ſacred Mouth,

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that *it was more bleſſed to give than to receive*, Acts xx.

I am not ignorant of the Oracle pronounced by this great God and Saviour, *That whoſoever doth not renounce Father, Mother, Houſes and Lands for my Sake, is not worthy of me*, Matt. x. This was ſaid to teach us, that we muſt renounce with Heart and Affection all Things in the World, and of this preſent Life, and that we muſt be always ready to forſake all, in caſe we cannot keep them without offending God, and giving a Scandal to his Church. But without ſuch abſolute Neceſſity, God requires not from us, in any Place of Scripture, actually to quit and leave our worldly Poſſeſſions.

I know alſo very well, that when a young Man enquired of our Saviour, *What he was to do to inherit eternal Life*, this wiſe Teacher returned him this Anſwer, *Sell all that thou haſt, and give it to the Poor, and thou ſhalt have Riches in Heaven; then come and follow me*, Luke xviii. This was a particular Commandment made only to that Man, upon a ſingular Occaſion; from whence it is not poſſible, that we ſhould gather any Concluſion to oblige others to the ſame Action: For otherwiſe this might oblige all Chriſtians in general to ſell what they have, without Exception, and to give it to the Poor. The Commandment was given upon this Occaſion: This vain-glorious *Phariſee* boaſted of having kept all the Commandments of God from his Youth up. To remove this good Opinion of himſelf out of his Mind, and to give Vent to the Swelling of his Phariſaical Pride, our Lord puts him to a Trial, enjoins him to ſell all his Goods, and to give them to the Poor. At theſe Words the young Man went away very ſad in a Confuſion, becauſe he had much Riches, and his ſtrongeſt Affections were fixed there. By this he diſcovered, that he was far from loving God with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, and with all his Strength, becauſe it appeared, that he loved his worldly Poſſeſſions more than *Chriſt* and his Bleſſedneſs. You may therefore underſtand without

out Difficulty, devout Souls, that this Commandment, made to this young Man, extends not to all in general. If it had been ſo underſtood, the holy Apoſtles, who were mindful of every Thing that tended to Perfection, would not have reſted ſatisfied with the Loſs of their Goods, to follow *Chriſt*, as they declared to him themſelves. *We have left all and have followed thee*, Matt. xix. but they would have reſerved nothing for themſelves; which Courſe they never took: For St. *John*, *Chriſt's* beloved Diſciple, had a Dwelling-houſe, where he entertained the holy Virgin after our Saviour's Death, *John* xix. And the other Apoſtles had their Ships, their Nets and Tacklings: Therefore after *Chriſt's* Reſurrection they returned to their Fiſhing-trade.

Our Saviour, upon the Occaſion of the young Man's refuſing to obey this expreſs and particular Command of *ſelling his Goods, and giving them to the Poor*, informs his Diſciples, *That it is hard for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* But he explains in another Place this Paſſage in ſuch a manner, that he leaves not the leaſt Difficulty in it; when he ſaith, that it is hard for them, who put their Confidence in Riches, to enter into the Kingdom of God, *Matt.* xix. By this we may underſtand, that he ſpeaks not of all rich Men in general, but of ſuch only who put their Truſt in their Riches. Therefore the Apoſtle St. *Paul* does not command the rich Men to caſt away their Eſtates and Goods; but he adviſes them not to put their Confidence in them, ſo as to become more vain and haughty. In this Manner, he ſpeaks in *Timothy*, *Charge them that are Rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all Things to enjoy*, 1 Tim. vi.

Here are therefore the beſt Directions, according to my Judgment for a True Chriſtian, who deſires his Soul to be acceptable to God, to attain the Diſpoſitions neceſſary for an happy Death.

1. We muſt employ our moſt conſtant and earneſt Endeavours and Affections for the ſpiritual Advan-

tages of the Soul, and of the Life to come. We muſt thirſt impatiently for the Graces of God, and for the Gifts of his holy Spirit. We muſt ſigh and long for the ſpiritual Robes of the Soul, and labour with all our Strength to attain to the incorruptible Crown and the immortal Glory of Heaven. *Chriſt* gives us this holy and ſafe Advice: *Seek*, ſaith he, *firſt the Kingdom of God, and its Righteouſneſs; and all theſe Things ſhall be added unto you*, Mat. vi. And elſewhere, *Labour not for the Meat which periſheth, but for that Meat which endureth unto everlaſting Life*, John vi.

2. As the good King *Solomon* built firſt the Lord's Houſe, and then laid the Foundation of his own Palace; thus we ought to proceed to labour firſt for the Advancement of God's Kingdom and the Edification of his Church, that then we may have Liberty to employ ourſelves about the Affairs of this preſent Life, and about our worldly Concerns. But our Employment and Calling muſt be juſt, and warranted by the Laws of God and Man; for he that gains Riches by unlawful Arts, is but a Thief and a Robber.

3. Before we engage in any Work, we muſt pray to God to vouchſafe his Bleſſing to it, and ſpeak to him as *Moſes*, *Let the Beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and eſtabliſh thou the Work of our Hand upon us; yea, the Work of our Hand, eſtabliſh thou it*, Pſ. xc. For without his Aſſiſtance and Bleſſing all our Labours will be in vain, and to little Purpoſe. It is God that makes poor, and makes rich, that lifts up, and abaſeth, *James* ii. *Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the Increaſe*, 1 Cor. iii. The Royal Prophet is of the ſame Judgement, when he ſaith, *If the Lord buildeth not the City, their Labour is but loſt that build it.*

4. Our Labour muſt be without Murmurings, and miſtruſting God's Providence; we muſt baniſh out of our Minds all idle Thoughts, and groundleſs Expectations, that diſturb us, *Pſ.* cvii. We muſt pluck out of our Hearts all the Cares and Diſpleaſures that trouble

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us. We muſt imprint in our Minds that excellent Sentence of *David*, *Caſt thy Burden upon the Lord, and he ſhall ſuſtain thee*, Pſal. v. and that of St. *Peter*, *Caſt all your Care upon him, for he careth for you*, 1 Pet. v. We muſt remember our Saviour's Charge, *Take heed to yourſelves, leſt at any Time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs, and the Cares of this Life*, Luke xxi.

5. Above all Things we muſt beware of the Slaviſh Vice of Covetouſneſs, that denies God's good Providence, and his fatherly Care. To that Purpoſe St. *Paul* exhorts us in expreſs Words, *Let your Converſation be without Covetouſneſs, and be content with ſuch Things as ye have; for he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee*, Heb. xiii. That he might beget in us an Averſion to this infamous Vice, St. *Paul* tells us, *They that will be rich, fall into Temptation and a Snare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful Luſts, which drown Men in Deſtruction and Perdition*, 1 Tim. vi. He adds next, *For the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil, which while ſome coveted after, they erred from the Faith, and pierced themſelves through with many Sorrows*, Col. iii. The ſame Apoſtle declares that Covetouſneſs is Idolatry, and that it ſhall never inherit the Kingdom of God, *Eph.* v. Therefore we ought to follow the wiſe King's Advice, *Labour not to be Rich, but forbear from any ſuch Deſign*, Prov. xxv.

6. If God pleaſe to afflict us with Poverty, and to caſt us down in the Duſt of a mean Eſtate, notwithſtanding our continual Labours in a lawful Calling, let us endeavour to poſſeſs our Souls with Patience. Look upon *Chriſt* our Saviour, who for our Sakes became poor, although he was rich, that we might be enriched by his Poverty. Let us beſeech him to grant us the bleſſed Diſpoſition of St. *Paul*, that we may be able to ſpeak as he did, *I have learned to be content in whatſoever Eſtate I am, I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound, every where, and in all Things; I am inſtructed both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound and to ſuffer Need. I can do all Things through Chriſt which ſtrengtheneth me*, Phil. iv. Remember, Chriſtian Souls,

to ſettle your Treaſure in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Ruſt can corrupt, and where Thieves cannot break through and ſteal; labour to be rich in Faith, and in good Works, that ye may inherit the Kingdom that God hath promiſed to them that love him.

7. But if it hath pleaſed God to bleſs thy Labours, and his powerful and liberal Hand hath raiſed thee up to great Honour, ſo that thou enjoyeſt Riches in Abundance, thou muſt remember to poſſeſs them in ſuch a manner, that they may not enſlave thee; and, according to St. *Paul's* Advice, thou muſt remember to enjoy them, as if thou enjoyeſt them not, and that the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away. We muſt not truſt upon them, nor pride in them. We ought to glory in ſomething elſe, as God himſelf exhorts us: Let not the wiſe Man boaſt of his Wiſdom, nor the ſtrong of his Strength; let not the rich Man glory in his Riches; but let him that glories, glory in that he hath underſtanding, and knows me, *Jer.* ix.

8. We muſt not only take off our Hearts and Affections from the World and its Vanities, trample upon them, and eſteem them like Dung, in compariſon of the unſpeakable Treaſures of Heaven; but we muſt alſo be ready to leave them at every Moment, as ſo many Trifles, vain and periſhable Things. As we are to poſſeſs them without Diſpleaſure and Fear, ſo we muſt part with them without Grief and Murmuring. Though we ſhould loſe in a Day all that God hath beſtowed upon us in this World, it becomes us to ſtrengthen ourſelves with an holy Confidence and Reſolution, ſaying with *Job*, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the Name of the Lord*, Job i.

9. If we happen to part with our Goods, Honours, and Dignities in the Service of God, and for the Profeſſion of *Chriſt's* Goſpel; in ſuch a Caſe we ought to endure the Loſs with a Chriſtian Patience, and an exceſſive Joy, becauſe that ſuch a Loſs for a juſt Cauſe will prove at laſt to our Advantage and Glory. This was the Practice of the faithful *Hebrews*, of whom St. *Paul* renders

renders this Teſtimony; *You have taken joyfully the ſpoiling of your Goods, knowing that you have in Heaven a better and more laſting Inheritance*, Heb. x. Chriſtian Souls, repreſent unto yourſelves the Example of the Prophet *Moſes*, who *eſteemed the Reproach of Chriſt greater Riches than Treaſures of* Egypt; *for he had a Reſpect unto the Recompence of the Reward*, Heb. x.

10. Whilſt we enjoy our Goods, we muſt take care of the Poor, and be bountiful in Alms; and to ſpeak in St. *Paul's* Language, *Whilſt we have Time, let us do Good, eſpecially to the Houſhold of Faith*, Gal. vi. Whoever hath Compaſſion on the Poor, makes God his Debtor; he will aſſuredly return him his good Deed, *Prov.* ix. Our Saviour promiſes to recompenſe a Cup of cold Water that ſhall be given to the meaneſt of ſuch as believe in his Name, *Matt.* x. Alms is a Seed that is caſt upon the Earth; but its Flowers, and moſt excellent Fruits are to be gathered in Heaven. He that ſows liberally, ſhall reap liberally, 2 *Col.* ix. It is not therefore as that other Seed, mentioned *Pſ.* cxvi. that they that ſow in Tears, ſhall reap in Songs of Triumph: For whoſoever beſtows his Alms ſparingly and unwillingly, he ſhall be treated in the ſame manner as he that refuſes to part with it. Therefore St. *Paul* declares, *Though I ſhould give all my Goods to nouriſh the Poor, if I have no Charity, I am nothing*, 1 Cor. xiii. God loves a chearful Giver, and delights in ſuch Sacrifices, 2 *Cor.* ix. Remember therefore, Chriſtian, that God ſhall judge you at the laſt Day, not by Learning, Knowledge, Riches, or Dignities and Honours of this Life, but by your Alms-deeds, and Acts of Charity and Hoſpitality, and by diſtributing of your Goods to the Neceſſities of the Saints. Make to yourſelves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs, that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlaſting Habitations, *Matt.* xxv. *Rom.* xii. *Luke* xxvi. that upon your Tomb one may juſtly engrave, *He hath ſcattered, he hath given to the Poor*; *his Righteouſneſs*, that is, his Charity and Alms-deeds, *remain for ever*, Pſal. cxi.

11. Finally, we muſt not only take off our Hearts and Affections from the Riches, Honours, and Vanities of this World, but we muſt alſo deny ourſelves, tame and overcome our Paſſions, and crucify our Fleſh with its Luſts. Therefore our great God and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt* calls upon us from Heaven, *He that will follow me, let him deny himſelf, take up his Croſs daily, and come after me*, Matt. x.

That we may be able to imprint this good Leſſon in our Minds, we muſt ſeriouſly conſider in the firſt Place that we are but Strangers and Pilgrims in this World, and that we have no laſting City, *Heb.* xiii. The Houſes that God grants to us, are no perpetual Dwellings, but only Inns for our preſent Conveniency. This was the frequent Conſideration of the great Patriarchs, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, who ſaw the Promiſes afar off, and believed and embraced them: For St. *Paul* informs us, they did ingenuouſly profeſs, that they were no better than Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, and their Intention was to march forwards to their celeſtial Country. This was *Jacob's* Language, when he appeared before *Pharaoh: The Days of my Pilgrimage have been ſhort and evil; they have not attained to the Years of the Life of my Fathers, and of the Time of their Pilgrimage*, *Heb.* xii. *Gen.* xlvii. And not only the ancient Patriarchs, who never had any other Poſſeſſions in the World than a Tomb, or ſome ſmall Piece of Ground, have acknowledged themſelves to be Strangers and Pilgrims; but Princes and Kings alſo, whom God hath ſanctified by his Holy Spirit, have freely confeſſed the ſame: For *David* declares, not in the Time of his Baniſhment, nor of his Flight, nor in his Calamities and Miſery; but in his moſt flouriſhing State, and in the Midſt of his Triumphs, Glory, Plenty, and Proſperity, he declares unto God, *I am a Stranger and a Sojourner with thee, as all my Fathers were*, Pſal. xxxix. and cxix. And when he ſpeaks not only of himſelf, but alſo of the reſt of God's Children that are upon Earth, he makes no Difficulty to confeſs, *We are Strangers and Sojourners with thee,*

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as all our Fathers were, and our Days are as a Shadow upon Earth, and there is none abiding, 1 Chron. xxix. Rich and Poor, Maſters and Servants, Princes and Subjects, all of us in general, may, with Reaſon, ſay to the Men of this World, as *Abraham* to the Children of *Heth, I am a Stranger and Sojourner in the Midſt of you.* Now he that travels in a ſtrange Country may gather ſome Flowers in his Paſſage, or take with him a few Ears of Corn; but if he be wiſe, he will never tarry to build a Palace. If he be well-treated in his Inn, he muſt not deſpiſe the good Cheer; but if his Entertainment be bad, he muſt endure with Patience the Inconveniencies, and contemn all the Diſorders that happen during his Abode. If the Way be deep, full of Mud, Briers and Thorns, he muſt go out of them as ſoon as he can; and if it be good and pleaſant, he muſt not ſtop in it, to buſy himſelf with needleſs Enquiries. Every one that is a Traveller, dreams of nothing but how to advance on his Journey, and go forward. Likewiſe, being accuſtomed to Plenty and Want, to Riches and Poverty, to Honour and Diſhonour, we ought to leave the Things that are behind, and to proceed forward to ſuch as are before, that we may attain to the End and Reward of our heavenly Calling, *Phil.* iii.

2. Conſider not only, I beſeech you, that we are Strangers and Sojourners in the World, and that we are not to inhabit always in this foreign Country; but that our Paſſage will be but for a few Days, *Rev.* viii. We need but little to nouriſh and entertain us in this ſhort Race; at the End of it we ſhall neither hunger nor thirſt, and the Sun ſhall burn us no more. As it happened with *Jacob* and his Family, when they went into *Egypt*, they had no other Corn nor Food, but what was needful and neceſſary for them in the Way, becauſe they were certain to meet with Plenty of all manner of good Things in *Joſeph's* Houſe: Likewiſe we need not make any great Proviſion for ourſelves in this Life, becauſe we are marching apace towards our Saviour *Chriſt*, our elder Brother, unto

whom God hath given all Power in Heaven and on Earth, *Matt.* xxiv. We are marching into a Country that abounds with all Manner of true Riches, Excellency, Glory, and Happineſs.

3. Conſider that we are not only Chriſtians, but Soldiers, and under the Banner of *Chriſt* our Captain, who judges him that fights juſtly, *Rev.* xix. *Job* acknowledges *that there is a Warfare appointed to all Mortals upon Earth*, Job vii. But I may ſay, that this Warfare is chiefly for ſuch as aim at the glorious Immortality, and that God calls them to endure grievous and violent Encounters. Therefore St. *Paul* exhorts his beloved Diſciple *Timothy, to behave himſelf as a good Soldier in this juſt War, and to fight the good Fight of Faith*, 1 Tim. i. Now he that goes to War, muſt not incumber himſelf with the Enjoyments of this Life.

4. Moreover, conſider that we are like to Soldiers who are engaged in an Enemy's Country, not with a deſign to conquer and eſtabliſh ourſelves there, but only to obtain a free Paſſage, having only an Intent to paſs through into our own native Soil. We do not deſire to get into our Hands the Inheritances and Poſſeſſions of the Worldlings, to rob them of their Crowns and Sceptres. We have no other Requeſt to make to them, but that which the Children of *Iſrael* made to the Inhabitants of *Edom*, when they were going into the promiſed Land, *Numb.* xxix. We deſire Leave to paſs peaceably, and go along by the King's Highway, to take Poſſeſſion of the Inheritance which God hath prepared for us from the Beginning of the World. We would not ſo much as taſte of a Bit of Bread without paying for it, nor drink a Cup of Water without Leave.

5. Conſider that this Life is a Race, and the World the Place to run in. Now ſuch as are in a Race muſt take heed that Thorns do not catch hold of them in their Courſe, nor that their Feet ſink in the Mire or the Clay; and that they may run ſwifter, they muſt caſt off all Burdens and Incumbrances. If therefore

we

we will run this Race in ſuch a manner, as that we may obtain the Prize, we muſt look that the Thorns and Briers of the World take not hold of us, and that we ſink not in the Mire of the dirty Pleaſures of this Life. We muſt caſt away all the Burdens that overcharge us, and eſpecially the Burden of Sin, which is ſo grievous, that Nature itſelf groans under it. It is the Intent of St. *Paul's* Exhortation, *Seeing we are compaſſed about with ſo great a Cloud of Witneſſes, let us lay aſide every Weight, and the Sin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us; and let us run with Patience the Race that is ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs*, Rom. viii. Heb. xii.

6. Conſider, that our Life is a continual Wreſtling; for we wreſtle not only againſt Fleſh and Blood, but alſo againſt Principalities and Powers, againſt the Lords of the World, and the Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, againſt ſpiritual Wickedneſs in high Places, *Epheſ.* vi. 1 *Cor.* x. Now he that intends to wreſtle well, muſt diet himſelf accordingly. If therefore for a corruptible Crown, Men diet their Bodies, render them ſupple and pliant, and abſtain from Delights and Pleaſure; how much more Reaſon have we to do the like, for an incorruptible and glorious Crown!

7. Conſider that God will have us to be conformable to the Image of his Son, and that we muſt follow his Footſteps. Now this good Saviour repreſents to us his own Condition, *Rom.* viii. 1 *Pet.* ii. *The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Neſts, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head*, Luke x. Therefore he made this Confeſſion before *Pontius Pilate, My Kingdom is not of this World*, John viii. And for that Reaſon he reproves the groſs and carnal Expectations of the two Diſciples as they were going to *Emmaus, O Fools and ſlow of Heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken!* Luke xxiv. *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe Things, and to enter into his Glory?* According to his

his bleſſed Example, we muſt have but a little Portion, and Concernment in the World, and enter by many Afflictions into the Kingdom of God, *Acts* xxiv.

8. I judge that it is alſo neceſſary, that we ſhould repreſent, at every Moment, unto ourſelves, that, to ſpeak properly, we can have but the Uſe, and not the right Enjoyment, of God's Creatures. We are intruſted with his Favours, as the Stewards of his Bleſſings and Riches. At every Moment he may call us to an Account, and require from us a Reaſon of our Behaviour, and take from us our Enjoyments. We ſhould therefore look upon our Houſes and Poſſeſſions as upon Things that are lent unto us: For as we are not diſpleaſed to reſtore what we have borrowed, and what we enjoy, as long as it pleaſes the lawful Owner to lend it; thus we ſhould gladly leave this preſent Life, and all our worldly Poſſeſſions, in caſe we can but perſuade ourſelves, that all belong to God, and that he hath lent them but for a Moment.

9. Moreover, it is neceſſary for us to conſider the fruitleſs Labours and Pains that we are at, when we purchaſe the Riches of the Earth, and aſcend up to Dignities and Honours: For as the Huſbandman, when he hath manured his Field, and watered it with his Sweat, is many times deceived of all his fair Hopes and Expectations, thus it commonly happens to the Covetous and Ambitious; they toil and labour in vain; the Good which they think to graſp, ſlides away between their Fingers as Water, or as Wax that melts at the firſt Approach of the Fire; and all the Honours which they expect to enjoy and embrace, are as a Shadow that ſoon vaniſhes, or as a Smoak that flies up out of their Reach; when they have well laboured for theſe Vanities, they reap nothing but Grief and Diſpleaſure.

10. Take notice of the ſmall Satisfaction that there is to be found in the moſt entire and perfect Enjoyment of the Advantages of this World. They are like Drink, which leaves us ſtill athirſt, and like empty

Meat, which cannot ſatiate our Longing; like the Waters of the Well of *Sychar*, whereof our Saviour ſaid to the Woman of *Samaria*, *He that drinketh of this Water, ſhall thirſt again*, John iv. It happens to the Worldlings, as to him who ſleeps hungry, and dreams that he is eating; when he awakes, his Stomach is empty, *Iſa.* xxix. or like to another, who thinks in his Sleep that he drinks; but when his Eyes are open, he finds himſelf thirſty, and his Appetite unſatisfied: For he who hungers for Money, is never contented with the Enjoyment of it; and he who thirſts for Vain-glory, can never be pleaſed with all the great Honours and Grandeurs of the World, *Eccl.* v. Inſtead of ſatiating his longing Appetite, theſe Things ſerve but to increaſe and augment it. The whole World was not large enough to ſatisfy the fooliſh Ambition of *Alexander:* For it is ſaid, he wept when a Philoſopher told him, there was yet many Worlds to conquer. This Man, for whom ſix Feet of Earth was ſufficient, had a Mind to command over a thouſand Worlds, if there had been ſo many.

11. Conſider that all the Treaſures and Riches of the *Indies*, and the Pomp and Grandeur of the World, are not able to bring Peace to the Soul, nor quiet to troubled Conſciences. When a poor Man has got together a little Silver and Gold, or when a Mean Perſon is raiſed to the higheſt Offices and Dignities, his Miſery continues ſtill, though it changes its Appearance. Oft times it is ſo much the more inſufferable, in that it puts on a falſe Luſtre, and a deceitful Gloſs, in that ſuch are conſtrained to live always maſked, to ſuppreſs the Pangs, the Griefs, the Sighs and Groans that often interrupt their prophane Smiles, and carnal Delights and Paſtimes.

Therefore our Saviour compares Riches to Thorns, for they prick and gall not only the Hands, but the Heart and the Bowels, of ſuch as embrace them with Affection. It may be alſo ſaid, that they are like Lions and Bears; for they are not to be caught without much

Difficulty,

Difficulty, and they are as uneaſy to be kept, becauſe we muſt take heed that we be not bit with their venomous and deadly Teeth. If you had but tried the horrible Diſpleaſures, the ſenſible Griefs, and ſecret Fears, with the tormenting Cares that attend upon the moſt glorious Sceptres, and the richeſt Crowns, you would never judge the Saying of that Prince unreaſonable, who exclaimed againſt his Royalty in this manner, *O Crown! if any did but know thy Weight, he would never lift thee up from the Ground.* The moſt Part of the Pleaſures and Satisfactions of this Life depends much upon Man's Imagination, and all this Grandeur and human Glory is nothing but Wind. The Royal Prophet teaches us this Truth with much Elegance, when he ſaith, *That every Man at his laſt State is altogether Vanity; ſurely every Man walketh in a vain Shew, ſurely they are diſquieted in vain,* Pſ. xxxix. *Solomon,* the moſt learned of all Kings, the richeſt and moſt magnificent Prince of his Time, had refuſed nothing to his Eyes to gratify his Luſt; he had taſted of all the Delights and Paſtimes that can be imagined; but at laſt he found ſo little Satisfaction and ſolid Content, that he was forced to acknowledge, That all Things under the Sun are but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, *Eccleſ.* ix.

12. Chiefly we are to conſider, that if our Enjoyments have been wrongfully gotten, as *Balaam's* Reward, *Achan's* Wedge of Gold, and Scarlet Cloak, *Gehazi's* Changes of Raiment, *Ahab's* and *Jezebel's* Vineyard, *Judas's* thirty Pieces, *Numb.* xxii. *Joſh.* vii. they bring no real Content or Peace to the Soul; but they rather fill us with Gripings of Conſcience, and with a fearful Deſpair, 2 *Kings* v. 1 *Kings* xxii. If the voluptuous Worldling, who hath enriched himſelf by Rapine, Uſury or Extortion, did wring with his Hands his ſumptuous Garments, where his Pomp and Pride appeared, he would viſibly ſqueeze out the Tears of the afflicted and poor People, *Matt.* xxvii. If he did but reliſh the right Taſte of the Liquors that he drinks out of his Cup of Jaſper and Cryſtal, he ſhould find, inſtead of Wine

Wine and Lemonade, the Sweat and Blood of the Miſerable; and if he had but ſeriouſly looked into the Silver and Golden Veſſels that are put upon his Table, he ſhould perceive the Marrow and the Bones of ſuch as he hath devoured. Whoſoever becomes fat with the Subſtance of the Widow and the Fatherleſs, ſhall never open his Coffers, but he may ſpy there the Image of the Devil, and the helliſh Furies; he may hear the Cries and Groans of ſuch whom he hath deſtroyed by his Injuſtice and Cruelty. If ſuch eſcape unpuniſhed here upon Earth, they ſhall ſurely feel the Severity of God's Vengeance hereafter. If there be no Sword to ſtrike them, nor Fire to conſume them, nor Leproſy to gnaw them, nor Dogs to tear them, nor Halter to hang them, they have a Guilty Conſcience that will perform more than this; for it will be their Witneſs to accuſe them, their Judge to condemn them, their Rack, their Wheel, and Executioner to torture them. The Time will come, when the Worm that never dies, and the Fire that ſhall never be quenched, ſhall torment and burn them.

13. Conſider, that it is poſſible to be very indigent in the Midſt of a great Plenty. The Poets have had a Deſign to repreſent this by the Fiction of a Man thirſting in a River, whereof the Waters reached up to his Chin. The covetous Miſer repreſents this Miſerable Wretch. He may alſo be compared to the Fig-tree of the Goſpel, curſed by our Saviour *Chriſt*, that brought forth no Fruit for others, and withered for want of Nouriſhment. Therefore a contented Poverty is more worthy than Riches with Diſcontent. Nature is ſatisfied with a little; Piety with leſs; but Covetouſneſs hath no Meaſure. The Heathens have very well acknowledged, that he was the richeſt who was moſt content; for the more Things you deſire, the more are wanting to you. It matters not much, if the Cup, which is preſented to you, be of Gold or Earth, ſo that there be Liquor enough to quench your Thirſt. I would rather drink of a little clear Stream of Water, than out of a great

great River all muddy and troubled. A little Quantity of Ground is sufficient to nourish a Man in this Life, but less necessary to cover him when he is dead. A little Money satisfies to subsist honestly in the Fear of God, but less is required to die happily, in the Favour and Love of our good Saviour. Kings, and the greatest Monarchs, have but one Body to nourish and to clothe, as well as the meanest of their Subjects. They who enjoy least in this World, use, or rather abuse, the most of any, the Things that they possess. Instead of envying the Worldling's Opulency, let us meditate upon St. *Paul's* excellent Saying, *Having Food and Raiment, let us be therewith content*, 1 Tim. vi. And let us imprint in our Minds that other Sentence, *Piety with Contentment is great Gain*, 1 Tim. i.

14. Christian Souls, cast your Eyes upon all the Things of the World that are most esteemed, and you shall find, that their Possession is but uncertain, and of short Continuance; For Riches have Wings to fly to Heaven as an Eagle. *All Flesh is like Grass, and the Glory of Man as the Flower of the Field; and the World passeth away with all its Lust*, Prov. xxiii. There needs but the Pillaging of a Town, the Breaking of a Merchant, or an unsuccessful or contrary Suit in Law, to render thee poor, and bring thee to Want. A little Sparkle of Fire is able to reduce all thy Riches into Ashes, and to bring thee to extreme Poverty. The least Frown can cover thy Face with Shame and Confusion, and cast thee down from the highest human Glory, into the deepest Abyss of Disgrace and Ignominy. The wise Man informs us, *That he who trusts in his Riches shall fall.* We may say so of such as rely too much upon great Men's Favour: For it is like a broken Reed, that pierces the Hands of such as lean upon it. There is nothing here below so constant as Inconstancy. If the Earth did not often change its Face and Appearance, it would not be Earth as it is; and if the World were not inconstant, it would cease to be a World. Therefore it is no Wonder, if the Heathens, who understood not

God's

God's wiſe Providence, that governs the natural Beings, and draws Light out of Darkneſs, have repreſented Fortune blind, mounting ſometimes on a Wheel, and in an Inſtant tumbling down again. How many Perſons do we meet with, reduced on a ſudden to Beggary, who a little before flouriſhed in all manner of Plenty! How many are caſt down into the Duſt, and become the Scorn of the World, who were once raiſed to the higheſt Dignities, and the higheſt Honours! How many fall into the Contempt and Deriſion of the Vulgar, whoſe Praiſes were once exalted up to Heaven! In a Word, how many do we ſee before our Eyes dragged along the Street, ſhut up in cloſe Priſons, brought upon the Scaffold and Gallows, who were once the Glory of the World, admired of all Men, and the Scourge of honeſt Men! When we run over, and conſider the ſtrange, unexpected, and ſudden Changes that we have ſeen in our Days, they ſeem to us as Dreams. St. *Paul* repreſents this great Inconſtancy of the World, to take off our Hearts and Affections from it. *The Time*, ſaith he, *is ſhort; it remaineth, that both they that have Wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they poſſeſſed not; and they that uſe this World, as not abuſing it; for the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away*, 1 Cor. vii. Becauſe of this great Inconſtancy of all worldly Advantages, St. *Paul* invites us to think upon the everlaſting Riches: *Charge them*, ſaith he, *that are rich, that they put not their Truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, laying up in Store for themſelves a good Foundation againſt the Time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal Life*, 1 Tim vi. For the ſame Reaſon the Son of God adviſeth us, *not to lay up for ourſelves Treaſures upon Earth, where the Moth and Ruſt do corrupt; but lay up for yourſelves Treaſures in Heaven, where the Moth and Ruſt do not corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through and ſteal*, Matt. vi. A wiſe *Perſian* was well acquainted with this Truth; therefore he hath left this Leſſon for Poſterity,

Poſterity, *The World is conſtant to no Man; my Brother, apply thyſelf, and thy Heart, to the great Creator of the World, and that ſhall ſuffice thee.*

15. Conſider, that if Riches and Honours leave us not in our Life-time, or in caſe none can take them away from us by Violence, it is moſt certain that Death will deprive us of all, and will ſeparate them from us for ever, *Pſ.* xlix. For when a Man dies he carries nothing with him, his Glory accompanies him not into his Grave, 1 *Tim.* vi. *We brought nothing into this World, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out, Job* i. The Kings and the greateſt Princes may ſpeak in this Language, as well as the meaneſt Soldiers of Fortune, *Naked I came from my Mother's Womb, and naked I ſhall return.* All the Treaſures, Riches, Sceptres, and Crowns, ſhall never advantage us after our Deceaſe. What was *Nebuchadnezzar* the better for having had ſo great a Number of People within his Dominions? They could not hinder him from lying down upon a Couch of Worms, nor preſerve him from being eaten with Vermin, *Iſa.* xiv. To what Purpoſe did the rich Glutton abound in all manner of Riches in his Life-time? After his Deceaſe he could not obtain a Drop of cold Water to aſſuage his violent Thirſt, *Luke* xvi. The Author of the Book of *Wiſdom* was entered into this Meditation, when he repreſented the Worldlings ſpending themſelves in Lamentations for their former Follies, and voluntary Blindneſs. *What hath Pride profited us,* ſay they, *or what Benefit hath Riches brought us? All theſe Things are paſſed away as a Shadow, as a Poſt that runs ſwiftly, or as a Ship that ſlides through the troubled Waves,* Wiſd. xvi. Our Heirs give us nothing of all our Subſtance but a Winding-ſheet, a few Boards, or, it may be, ſome Pounds of Lead; all conſumes with us, and rots in our Grave in Time. In ſhort, we muſt not only quit and abandon all our Honours, Dignities, Treaſures and Riches; but we muſt alſo quit this Body, this Fleſh and Bones, covered with this beautiful Skin. O Man! remember that thou art but Duſt, and that thou ſhalt return to Duſt.

16. *Sa-*

16. *Saladin*, the famous Sultan of *Egypt*, hath left to Poſterity an illuſtrious Teſtimony of the Vanity of all Riches and worldly Grandeur; for upon his Death-bed he commanded that his Winding-ſheet ſhould be carried at the End of a Lance by a Herald, who was to proclaim, *Here is all that this great Prince hath carried away of his Riches, Glory, Principalities, and Lordſhips, which he enjoyed upon Earth.*

17. Conſider, that it is a great Cauſe of Grief, that we know not who ſhall inherit the Fruits of all our Labours, which we keep with ſo much Care, and reſtleſs Fears. Who knows but our greateſt Enemies, and, that which is worſe, God's Enemies, ſhall clothe themſelves with our Spoils; and that which we have been gathering many Years, ſhall be ſpent in a Moment? Of this Vanity and Evil the Royal Prophet complains, *Pſal.* xxxix. *Surely, every Man walketh in a vain Shew; ſurely they are diſquieted in vain; he heapeth up Riches, and knoweth not who ſhall gather them.*

18. Conſider well, Chriſtian People, the dangerous Effects wrought in us by the Love of the World, and the Deceitfulneſs of *Riches:* It ſtifles in our Hearts the *good Seed* of the Goſpel, *Matt.* xiii. It hinders it from growing up to Salvation: It keeps many from glorifying God, and making an open Profeſſion of the Truth; as it is ſaid of ſome of the chief *Phariſees*, that they believed in our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, but they would not confeſs him before Men, becauſe they loved more the Glory of Men than the Glory of God. Therefore when *Cyrus* made proclamation, that the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould have full Liberty in their own Country to rebuild *Jeruſalem*, to repair God's Temple, to reeſtabliſh his neglected Services, there were many *Jews* that cared not to obey this Prince's Command, nor God's Call: becauſe they were ſettled in *Babylon*, they were too much wedded to the Pleaſures and Delights of that City, and therefore loth to part with their Concerns there for *Jeruſalem*. For the ſame Cauſe that young Man, mentioned before, would not follow the

Saviour of the World, nor obey his Command, becauſe he had much Riches, and had ſettled his Heart and Affections upon them. As God's Ark and *Dagon* cannot dwell together under one Roof, 1 *Sam.* v. ſo the Love of God and the Love of the World can never ſubſiſt together. Therefore St. *John* adviſeth us, *Love not the World, nor the Things that are in the World; if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him,* 1 John ii.

19. Take Notice, that this is the Paſſion that ſtops ſo many in their firſt Beginnings of Piety: For, as *Lot's* Wife was changed into a Statue of Salt, as ſoon as ſhe had looked behind her; ſo when God ſends his Angels to take us by the Hand, and drag us out of the ſpiritual *Sodom*, there is nothing more dangerous than to look with Regret and Longings for carnal Delights and worldly Advantages, which we are then totally to quit. That alone is able to ſtop our proceeding forward, to ſtifle our Zeal, and to cauſe all pious Intentions to vaniſh into the Air; there we muſt imprint in our Minds this excellent Sentence of our Saviour, *No Man that puts his Hand to the Plough, and doth look back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.*

20. This is the Cauſe that ſo many Perſons, eſteemed well-grounded in Religion and Piety, are prevailed upon, at laſt, to turn their Backs to God, and to make Shipwreck of their Faith. What was the Reaſon of the *Iſraelites* murmuring ſo often, and deſiring to return into *Egypt?* Was it not, as we have already taken Notice, becauſe their Hearts and Affections were ſettled and fixed on that curſed Land, from whence God had delivered them by ſo many Miracles? And wherefore did *Demas* leave St. *Paul* and *Chriſt's* Goſpel? It was becauſe *he loved too much this preſent World.* In ſhort, our own Experience confirms to us the Saying of our Saviour, *No Man can ſerve two Maſters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will cleave to the one, and deſpiſe the other; you cannot ſerve God and Mammon.*

21. Con-

21. Conſider, that if theſe worldly Goods and Honours do not produce in us theſe woeful and lamentable Effects, they often produce them in our Poſterity. Many would live happier in the World, and be honeſter Men, if their Parents had not left them ſo much Riches and ſo many Honours to poſſeſs. Their Riches and Honours therefore draw upon them many Evils, and oft-times they caſt them headlong into ſeveral Debaucheries and Inſolencies. It is that which fills them full of ridiculous Vanity, and of unſufferable Pride, that renders them hateful to God and Man. In a Word, it is that which makes them to forget God, and be unmindful of the Treaſures and Advantages of his Kingdom, *Prov.* xxx. Therefore *Agar* preſented this excellent Prayer unto God, *Give me neither Poverty nor Riches; feed me with Food convenient for me; leſt I be full, and deny thee, and ſay, Who is the Lord? or leſt I be poor, and ſteal, and take the Name of my God in vain.* Wretched Man! to what Purpoſe doſt thou labour ſo carefully to gather up Riches for thy Children? It may be that theſe Riches which thou takeſt from others, or which thou doſt get with the Loſs of thy Soul, ſhall ſerve to make *golden Calves*, to be the Subſtance of infamous Idols, as *Gideon's* Gold, plundered upon the *Midianites*, was employed in an Ephod, which became a Snare to his Houſe, and to all *Iſrael*. Thus it happens many Times, that the Goods which are gotten with the Expence of much Blood and Sweat, and the Honours unto which we climb up with ſo much Earneſtneſs and Paſſion, become a Snare to our Poſterity; they caſt them Headlong into an Abyſs of Miſery.

22. I ſhould not forget that Death is a Kind of Sleep; therefore, in holy Scripture, to die, and to fall aſleep, are to be underſtood in the ſame Senſe. Now, as we cannot conveniently fall aſleep, unleſs we ſet aſide and forget all the troubleſome Affairs of the World; likewiſe it is altogether impoſſible to die comfortably and peaceably, if we baniſh not out of our Hearts, betimes, all the fooliſh Fancies that diſturb us, and all the ſharp Cares that undermine and conſume us.

23. To this Purpoſe, profane Hiſtory tells us of a remarkabls Paſſage of *Cyneas*, a great Miniſter of State to *Pyrrhus*, King of *Epirus*; that when he ſaw his Maſter ſo buſy in raiſing an Army, to march againſt the *Romans*, he began to argue with him in this manner; *Sir, if it pleaſe God to grant you the Victory over the* Romans, *how could you employ yourſelf next?* The King anſwered, We will then endeavour to conquer the reſt of *Italy*. And when we ſhall have *Italy* in our Poſſeſſion, replied *Cyneas*, what ſhall we do afterwards? We will go againſt *Sicily*, ſaid the King. The diſcreet *Cyneas* continued to demand, And when we have all *Sicily*, what ſhall we do? *Pyrrhus* anſwered him, We will paſs to *Africa*, and take *Carthage*; and after that we may recover *Macedonia*, and command all *Greece* without Controul. But, Sir, replied *Cyneas*, when we ſhall have got all in our Poſſeſſion, what ſhall we do then? The King anſwered him with a ſmiling Countenance, We will then repoſe ourſelves, and take our Fill of Delights and Pleaſures. Then *Cyneas* began to aſk the King, what hinders us now, Sir, from taking our Rights and Delights? For we have all that in our Hands, that we are going to ſeek ſo far, with ſo much Bloodſhed and Danger. We may apply this to ourſelves; we have, moſt of us, intricate and hidden Deſigns, which cannot be accompliſhed in the Age of one Man. We are afraid to die, as if Death had already caught us by the Throat; and yet we have ſo many Deſires to fulfil, as if we were immortal.

We build and adorn our ſumptuous Dwellings, as if we were never to leave the World; and we are always gathering ſo much, as if we had the Charge of providing for a royal Army. Let us therefore, in this Caſe, imitate this wiſe Miniſter of State; let us aſk ourſelves, For what Purpoſe are theſe vaſt Deſigns? What End do we propoſe to ourſelves of all our Labours, and Care? What do we aim at when we run ſo many Dangers, and endure ſo many Inconveniencies? Our Souls will anſwer us, without Doubt, that it is with an

an Intent at laſt to reſt ourſelves in Peace, to live at Eaſe, and to enjoy the Fruits of our Labours. Let us enjoy that Happineſs and that Satisfaction at preſent; let us not ſtay to reſt ourſelves, until Death ſhall ſtretch us in our Graves. Let us be ſatisfied with the Goods that God hath already beſtowed upon us, and let us uſe them with Thankſgiving. Miſerable Wretches that we are! Why do we labour and torment ourſelves for ſo many Things, ſeeing that there is but one Thing neceſſary, and that is, Piety, the Fear of the Lord, and the Expectation of his eternal Felicities? Let us therefore make an Election of this good Part, and it ſhall never be taken from us, *Luke* x.

24. If we deſire to imprint in our Minds the Contempt of the World, and its Vanities, we muſt often meditate, with ſerious Attention, upon the Excellency of our Nature, ſanctified by Grace, upon the Worthineſs of our ſpiritual Calling, and upon the Riches and Glory of that eternal Happineſs which God hath provided for us in Heaven. It is impoſſible to look upon theſe Things as we ought; but we muſt conclude with the Apoſtle, that the World, with all its Pleaſures and Treaſures, is not worthy of us. The Woman that appeared to St. *John* in a Viſion, was clothed with the Sun, having the Moon under her Feet, and a Crown of twelve Stars upon her Head. This is a lively Image of *Chriſt's* Church in general, and of every faithful Soul in particular: For, when we are clothed and adorned with *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, we ought to trample upon all the Pomp and Magnificence of the World, and laugh at the Revolutions of the Ages, at the Vanities and Inconſtancy of the Earth. We muſt ſeek our greateſt Glory, and our moſt raviſhing Delights, in the Doctrine of the twelve Apoſtles, who are ſo many Stars ſhining in the Firmament of the Church. Let the World alter its Face as often as the deceitful *Laban*; we ought to reſemble the Rays of the Sun, always alike: For our Glory is not as that of the World and the Princes of this

Age, which is reduced to nothing. It is not ſettled upon a vain and failing Foundation; but upon the living and true God, who is the ſame Yeſterday, To-day, and will be the ſame for all Eternity, *Heb.* xiv. Some glory in their Chariots, others in their Horſes; but we will boaſt in the Name of the Lord our God, *Heb.* xiii. *Pſal.* xxix.

25. Conſider, that God hath given us Faces looking up towards Heaven, that he might thereby teach us to lift up thither our Hearts, and carry thither our Affections and Deſires. He hath created our Souls, and given them a ſpiritual Being, that they may take their Flight above all earthly Matter. He hath adorned them with Immortality, that they might contemn all Things that are not immortal as themſelves, all decaying and periſhing Enjoyments. In ſhort, ſeeing that God hath prepared for us in Heaven his Paradiſe, his Glory, his Treaſures, and the Rivers of our eternal Delights, how can we confine our Deſires, and be content with this Duſt of the Earth, where Serpents crawl?

26. When *Alexander* was preparing to leave *Macedonia*, and go to the conqueſt of the *Perſian* Monarchy, he gave away all his Goods to his faithful Friends, and Servants. *Perdiccas*, one of his Favourites, enquiring of him, what he had reſerved for himſelf, the King anſwered, that he had reſerved HOPE. Thus ought we to diſpoſe ourſelves to depart out of the World, by leaving our Parents, Friends, and Eſtates, that we now enjoy. And if our Fleſh enquires of us what we have kept for ourſelves, let us confidently anſwer, that we have kept our HOPE. I may aſſure you, Chriſtian Souls, that this your Anſwer ſhall be better grounded than that of *Alexander* to his Favourites: For this Prince left his Patrimony and Kingdom without any Conſtraint; but whether we will or no, we muſt leave the World. *Alexander* quitted certain Goods for a doubtful Hope; but we abandon periſhing Enjoyments, for an Hope more ſecure and ſettled than Heaven and Earth. *Alexander's*

der's Expectation was but of a temporal Kingdom, and of a ſhort and vaniſhing Glory; but our Expectation is of an incorruptible Crown and eternal Triumphs: Death, that ſeized upon *Alexander* in the Flower of his Age, put a Period to all his Victories, and conſumed all his Trophies; but we are in Hopes of conquering Death itſelf, and this Hope will not deceive us, *Rom.* v. This therefore being our Aſſiſtance, it is no Wonder if St. *Paul* tells us, *That Hope is as a ſure and unmoveable Anchor to the Soul, piercing into the Veil, that is, into Heaven itſelf, where Jeſus Chriſt is entered in as our Fore-runner.*

27. God hath hid in the Earth, Gold, Silver, and Jewels, to teach us to trample upon the Riches and Pomp of the World. But he hath raiſed us up to the higheſt Heavens, our ſpiritual Treaſure, and our immortal Crowns, that we might lift up thither our Hearts, and our moſt earneſt Affections. He deſires that we ſhould imitate the Prophet *David*, who always comforted himſelf, in his Baniſhment and Perſecutions, with the Expectation of the Kingdom promiſed to him, and confirmed by *Samuel's* Unction. God would have us to do as the true *Iſraelites* in the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; they had always their Hearts and Affections in *Jeruſalem*; in the Midſt of their great Sorrows *Jeruſalem* was all their Comfort. Likewiſe we, who are wandering up and down this miſerable Wilderneſs, who live in the World as in a *Babylon*, in a Kind of Captivity, ought to comfort ourſelves, and rejoice in Expectation of the Kingdom of Heaven, which hath been prepared for our Fruition from all Eternity, and whereof the holy Spirit is the true Unction, which hath confirmed the Promiſe of it, and given us the Earneſt, *Pſal.* cxxxvii. *Gal.* iv. The Eye of our Faith ſhould always be fixed upon our celeſtial *Jeruſalem*, that is, the Mother of us all, and the Place of our eternal Reſt, *Col.* iii. The Apoſtle therefore exhorts us, *If you be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe Things that are above, where Chriſt ſits at*

the Right-Hand of God; think on Things that are above, and not on Things on the Earth; for you are dead, and your Life is hid with Chriſt in God.

28. When Men are going to live in another Country, where their Money will not paſs, they furniſh themſelves with *Bills of Exchange*, and find the Means of receiving it in other Coin. Therefore, ſeeing that our Gold, our Silver, and our preſent Jewels, will not paſs in Heaven, the Place of our eternal Abode, let us ſend thither betimes all our Riches and Treaſures by *Bills of Exchange*. And that we may entruſt them with an Aſſurance of a notable Advantage, and of a lawful Gain, let us put them in God's Hands; for he will reſtore us a hundred Times more in his Kingdom. Let us now diſtribute them to the Poor, to the Members of *Chriſt's* myſtical Body; and this divine Saviour will then acknowledge, that they had been given to his own Perſon. You that fear ſo much to loſe your Money, get ſuch Purſes as will never decay, and make yourſelves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs, that when you fail, they may receive you into eternal Habitations.

29. Laſtly, as the *Iſraelites*, when they had taſted of the Fruits of the Land of *Canaan*, deſired, with a moſt earneſt Paſſion, to enjoy ſuch a noble and delicious Country, and their Abode in the Wilderneſs became tedious and unſufferable; likewiſe we, who have the firſt Fruit of the Spirit, and the Foretaſte of our heavenly Paradiſe, let us aſpire with our Hearts to the heavenly *Canaan*, and let us long continually for thoſe unſpeakable Delights. All worldly Pleaſures ſhould have no Reliſh with us, and the greateſt Sweetneſs of this Life ſhould be turned into Bitterneſs; ſo that we may often preſent *David's* Prayer unto God, *Remember me, O Lord, with the Favour that thou beareſt unto thy People; O viſit me with thy Salvation; that I may ſee the Good of thy Choſen; that I may rejoice in the Gladneſs of thy Nation; that I may glory with thine Inheritance*, Pſ. cvi.

To conclude this Diſcourſe; ſeeing that we have no laſting City here below, but that we ſeek for that which is to come; ſeeing that we know not the Hour when God ſhall take us out of the World to introduce us in his holy *Jeruſalem*, Heb. xi. Luke xxi. let us take heed, that our Hearts be not overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenneſs, and with the Cares of this Life, leſt that Day ſurpriſe us unawares: And as the holy Apoſtles left their Nets to follow *Jeſus Chriſt*, Matt. iv. let us leave alſo the vain Cares, the ill-grounded Fears, and deceiving Hopes, that entangle our Souls; that when it ſhall pleaſe God to call us, we may be ready to anſwer his heavenly Meſſage. Let us accuſtom ourſelves betimes to will what God willeth, and to obey him without Reſiſtance. Let us caſt all our Cares upon God, and repoſe ourſelves upon his wiſe and fatherly Providence, 1 *Pet.* v. Let us look with Contempt upon the World, upon its vain Grandeur, and upon its decaying Riches; eſteem not any thing upon Earth, nor that which Man is able to promiſe or procure; but eſteem and value the bleſſed Advantages that we expect in Heaven, and that are diſpoſed and entruſted in God's own Hands, 2 *Tim.* i. *Tit.* ii. Let us prefer *Job's* Dunghill and Aſhes before the proud Throne and glorious Monarchy of *Nebuchadnezzar*. Let us fancy the Beggary of poor *Lazarus* more happy than the overflowing Abundance of the rich Miſer. Imprint in our Minds that bleſſed Saying of the Son of God, *What would it profit a Man, if he gains the whole World, if he deſtroys himſelf, and loſeth his Soul?* Luke ix. Let us have always before our Eyes the Image of that rich Worldling, who had gathered much Wealth for his Soul, but his Soul was not wealthy nor rich before God: Remember what he ſaith to his Soul, *Soul, thou haſt much Goods laid up for many Years; reſt thyſelf, eat and drink, and be merry:* But what ſays God to him, *Thou Fool, this very Night thy Soul ſhall be taken away from thee; and the Things that*

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thou haſt gathered, whoſe ſhall they be? Inſtead of ſtudying how to enlarge our Barns and Cellars, and to increaſe our Revenues and Treaſures, let us labour to ſet ſome Bounds to our Deſires, and let us be content with what we have at preſent. Seeing we have but a Breath in our Noſtrils, and that we are clothed with a mortal Body, let us not entertain ſuch vaſt Deſigns, nor ſuffer our Longings to be perpetual. Let us always, in every Place, be ready to end our Life, to put the laſt Stone to its Building; or, rather, let us be always in a Diſpoſition of diſſolving this earthly Tabernacle. Let us willingly break all the Bands and Ties that faſten us to this miſerable Earth, that when Death ſhall come, it may have nothing to do but to cut the laſt String, by which our Soul is naturally joined to this languiſhing Body. Settle and fix your ſtrongeſt Affections in Heaven, that where your Treaſure is, your Hearts may be there alſo. Let us not be lulled aſleep, as the fooliſh Virgins; but having our Reins girded, and our Candles lighted, let us be prepared, at every Moment, to go and meet our heavenly Spouſe, and follow him into the Marriage Chamber. Let us be like a Ship at Anchor, ready to ſet Sail with the firſt fair Wind, and as a Soldier newly armed, that waits for the Day of Battle, and for the Signal to mount upon his Horſe, that he may appear in the Field at the Sound of the Trumpet. Let us ſend, before-hand, all our precious Jewels into the moſt glorious Palace of Eternity; that our Bag and Baggage being ready prepared, we may have nothing to do, but to take our laſt Farewel. If any Conſideration of Fleſh and Blood hinders us, let us break aſunder all theſe Bands by the Strength of our *Nazarene*, that is, by the Virtue of God's Holy Spirit, which he hath been graciouſly pleaſed to grant unto us. And if the Perſons that we love and cheriſh as tenderly as our Soul, or thoſe whom we are to reverence and honour, labour to ſtir up the Bowels of our Compaſſion, and to impede

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us in our holy Reſolutions, by baſe and earthly Conſiderations; let us tell them, as our Saviour did *Mary Magdalen*, *Touch me not*; *for I am going to my Father*, John xv. Stop not my Courſe; for I hold already the Prize, and the promiſed Crown. In ſhort, as *Abraham* let the Ram looſe, whereof the Horns were taken in a Thicket, and offered it up in Sacrifice to God, *Gen.* xxi. ſo let us free our Minds from all worldly Cares and carnal Affections; let us offer them up all to God, as a ſweet-ſmelling Sacrifice; let us preſent them as a Burnt-offering, conſume them in the Flames of an holy Zeal and Love of his Divine Majeſty. When the Chriſtian ſhall be thus prepared, he ſhall never ſtand in Fear of Death; he will ſay to it with an aſſured Countenance, Come when thou wilt, O Death; I deſire no Reprieve; for, a long while ago, I have ſettled my Affairs, and wait for thee with Patience. The chief Part of myſelf is not here below; my Heart is already raviſhed into Heaven, where God expects me with open Arms. Therefore, notwithſtanding thy fearful Darkneſs, and the Deſign that thou haſt to deſtroy me, I will follow thee as courageouſly, and as joyfully as St. *Peter* did the Angel of Night, that opened to him the Gates of his Priſon, and freed him from his Chains, *Acts* xii.

A Prayer and Meditation for ſuch as prepare for Death by a Renunciation of the World.

O Infinite Lord of Heaven and Earth, who diſpoſeſt of Good and Evil by thy divine Providence and admirable Wiſdom! thou haſt not ſuffered us to have here an abiding City, that we might ſeek for that which is to come. Thou diſcovereſt before our Eyes the Vanity and Inconſtancy of all Things under the Sun, that we might labour to attain to ſolid and everlaſting Advantages. Thou haſt placed and reſerved in Heaven inexhauſtible Treaſures of Riches, uncorruptible Crowns of Glory and eternal Triumphs,

Triumphs, that thither we might tranſport our Hearts and Affections. The Source of heavenly Pleaſures is with thee, that we might always be athirſt for the ſtrong and living God; and that we might deſire, with an holy Earneſtneſs, to look upon thy beautiful and glorious Face. Moſt glorious Creator, ſeeing thou haſt beſtowed on me an immortal Soul, ſuffer me not to be ſo wretched, as to doat upon theſe periſhing Vanities; and ſeeing thou haſt made it of a ſpiritual and heavenly Nature, ſuffer me not to be ſo unhappy as to wallow in this miſerable Duſt of the Earth, or to caſt myſelf into the Puddle and Dirt of carnal Luſts. Give me Grace to renounce the World, and all the Vanities that the World adores. Give me Grace to poſſeſs all theſe decaying Things, as not poſſeſſing them; that I may trample upon all the Pomp and Glory of the Age; that I may conſider, that the Gold, the Silver, the precious Jewels, whereof the apparent Beauty deceives the carnal Eye of Man, is nothing elſe but concrete Earth, that will diſſolve again into Duſt; that I may remember, that after my Deceaſe, all theſe Things will profit me no more than the Earth and Stones which ſhall cover my dead Corpſe, or the Wood or Lead which ſhall be given to it for a Coffin. Give me Grace to deſpiſe all the Honours and Dignities, after which Men of the World run ſo impatiently; for they are but like a Shadow that paſſes away, and like the Smoak that aſcendeth up out of our Reach. Pluck out of my Heart the Cares of this Life, and all Solicitouſneſs for the Earth, that Death may never ſurprize me unawares, and that there may be nothing to ſtop or hinder me from going to thee, when thou ſhalt be pleaſed to call me; that my Soul, being totally diſengaged and freed from all theſe Briers and Thorns, I may be ready always at every Moment, to be offered unto thee as a living and burnt Sacrifice. The Children of Iſrael *waited for thine Orders to pitch and move their Camp: Give me alſo Grace to be as ready prepared to live and die, to remain in this Tabernacle, and to depart out of it, when thou ſhalt ſend thy Warrant. And as this People went over the River* Jordan *with a wonderful Joy, to take*

Poſſeſſion

Poſſeſſion of the promiſed Land; O that I might alſo leave this miſerable Wilderneſs with the Tranſports to enter into the celeſtial Canaan, *where the Milk and Honey of Divine Pleaſure and of eternal Comforts flow, as in their natural Channel! O God, who art my Portion and mine Inheritance, caſt me not away with the Men of the World, whoſe Portion is in this Life. Thou filleſt their Paunch with thy good Things, ſo that they are full, and leave ſufficient for their Babes. But, as for me, all my Comfort is, that I ſhall behold thy Face in Righteouſneſs, and ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy Likeneſs.*

CHAP. XI.

The fifth Remedy againſt the Fears of Death is, to forſake Vice, and to apply ourſelves to the Practice of Piety and Sanctification.

GOD is wonderful in all his Works, and he governs all his Creatures in ſuch a Manner that draws from his very Enemies the Acknowledgment of his Truth. You have an excellent Example in *Balaam*, who, beholding the Tents of the Children of *Iſrael*, breaks out into this paſſionate Wiſh, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my laſt End be like his*, Numb. xxiii. He was a wicked Varlet, that loved the Wages of Iniquity; nevertheleſs he perceived, by that prophetical Light, with which his Soul was enlightened, how ſweet and comfortable Death was to ſuch as addicted themſelves, in this Life, to the Service and Fear of Almighty God, and how different it is to the Death of the profane Worldlings, who give themſelves over to their Luſts, and delight in the unlawful Pleaſures of the Fleſh: For as Drunkards ſleep with a diſturbed and unquiet Fancy; likewiſe ſuch as are drunken and full with the baſe and rotten Pleaſures of this Life, if they be not hardened

hardened by *Atheism*, commonly depart out of this World with strange Frights, and horrid Gripings of Conscience, that cannot be expected. It is otherwise with a good Christian; for as the Handicrafts-man, who hath worked all the Day in his Shop, and the Husbandman, who hath wearied himself in following the Plough, lays himself down at Night in Peace; so it is with a good Christian, who hath carefully attended the Works of Piety and Mercy in this Life. He takes his last Sleep with great Quiet of Mind, and Satisfaction of his Soul. As righteous *Jacob*, when he travelled a Journey to his Mother's Friends, at his Father's Command, was not frighted to see the Sun go down, though he was in the Midst of an open Field, *Gen.* xxviii. but he laid him down in Peace, and slept sweetly, having no other Bed but the Earth, no other Pillow but a Stone, no other Covering but the Heavens, no other Curtains than the dark Shadows of the Night; likewise a Soul sanctified with the Spirit of God, that walks in all the Commands of his heavenly Father, shall never be astonished: For whersoever the Sun goes down, wheresoever Death arrests him, he will look upon himself as in another *Bethel*; he will sleep quietly in the Lord *Jesus*, and in the most cruel Death he will feel unspeakable and glorious Joys, and the Peace of God which passeth all understanding, *Acts* xxiii.

We may take Notice of this blessed Disposition in the Apostle St. *Paul*, who had behaved himself with a good Conscience towards God, and towards Man, 1 *Cor.* xv. He had laboured more in the Ministry than all the other Apostles; therefore he stood in no Fear of Death's Approaches: But rather we may see him full of Expectations and Desires to pass through Death into Glory, and eternal Felicity. This Disposition is no less remarkable in *Stephen*, the first Martyr of *Christ*, Acts vi. In the Midst of the most grievous Torments he had a Countenance shining as that of an Angel, which was a certain Testimony of his inward Peace of

of Conſcience, and of the extraordinary Joy of his Soul: For, as the wiſe Man informs us, *A merry Heart maketh a chearful Countenance*, Prov. xv. From the ſame Wiſdom proceeds this other Oracle, that foretels unto every one what ſhall happen unto him, *The Wicked is driven away in his Wickedneſs, but the Righteous hath Hope in his Death*, Prov. xiv. Eccl. i. To this agrees the excellent Saying of *Jeſus* the Son of *Sirach*, *It ſhall be well at the laſt with him who fears God; he ſhall find Favour at the Day of his Death.* This Life is but a Moment that flies away apace; yet it determines our eternal State. It raiſes us to the higheſt Glory of Heaven, or elſe it caſts us headlong into the deepeſt Abyſs of eternal Miſery: For what a Man ſoweth, that he ſhall reap; he that ſoweth in the Fleſh, ſhall reap of the Fleſh, Corruption; but he that ſoweth in the Spirit, ſhall reap of the Spirit, eternal Life.

If you are afraid of a cruel and unhappy Death, keep yourſelves from an evil and profane Life; for commonly, as a Man's Life is, ſo is his Death. The moſt Part of thoſe who live in filthy Luſts and Impiety, depart with hardened Hearts, or in Deſpair. God's Patience, wearied out, turns into a juſt Reſentment, and Wrath. Commonly, God leaves at the Hour of Death ſuch as have left him in the Courſe of their Lives. He is inexorable to the Cries and Sighs of ſuch as have ſhut their Ears and Hearts to his holy Word, and his fatherly Admonitions. He laughs at the Amazement and moſt ſenſible Torments of thoſe who trample upon his ſacred Commands; as he tells us, *Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded; but ye have ſet at nought all my Counſel, and would none of my Reproof; I alſo will laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear cometh*, Prov. i.

King *Ahab* deſired to hear a grateful Prophecy of happy Things; of Victory over the *Syrian* Army; nevertheleſs he continued in his Impieties and Tyranny: Therefore, the Prophet Micah was not afraid of his Diſpleaſure, but tells him boldly of the approaching

Judgement of God, which hanged over his guilty Head. Likewiſe ſome Sinners deſire to be flattered and ſoothed up in their Extravagancies; they expect, notwithſtanding their Crimes, Promiſes for Joy and Proſperity. But we ſhould be falſe Prophets, poſſeſſed with a lying Spirit, if we did not foretel to ſuch People, that a moſt lamentable and miſerable Death haſtens apace upon them; our Charity for them would be cruel, if we did not labour to ſave them by Fear, as out of a Fire; if we did not ſhew them Hell with its Jaws open, ready to ſwallow them up, and the eternal Torments wherewith God will puniſh all impenitent and hardened Sinners. Knowing what God's Vengeance is, we muſt perſuade Men to embrace Faith and Righteouſneſs; and if we did fail in this our Duty, their Blood would be required at our Hands.

To what Purpoſe have the Heathen Philoſophers diſcourſed ſo learnedly of the Shortneſs of our Life? To what Purpoſe have many of their Princes entertained *Mementoes* of their Mortality, and ſlightly paſſed over ſuch Thoughts, whilſt they reaped little Benefit from them, becauſe they did not prevail upon them to reform their Lives, and by conſequence to prepare for a bleſſed Death? It was alſo to no Purpoſe that *Balaam* deſired ſo paſſionately to die the Death of the Righteous, and that his laſt End might be like a juſt Man's, *Numb.* xxiii. becauſe he lived the Life of Sinners, and continued in their Abominations and Idolatry, *Numb.* xxxi. therefore died he as they, and was comprehended in their Puniſhment. As he was a Partner in their Crimes, it was but juſt and reaſonable, that he ſhould ſhare in their Calamity, and be Partaker of their Torments.

To abandon Vice and Sin, is to take from Death its Venom and all its fiery Darts. It is to pluck from this furious Beaſt its Teeth and Claws. It is to break the Cords and Chains, by which the Devil drags us into eternal Damnation. It is to deſtroy the Monſters that fright us, and ſtifle the Furies that purſue us. In ſhort,

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it tends to change Hell, and its grievous Torments, into Heaven and its Glory. There was never yet any Perſon that lived an holy and religious Life, but he died happily in the Favour of God. Now that the Lord knocks, open unto him the Doors of your Hearts, and at the Hour of Death he will open unto you the Gates of Heaven. Preſent and give him, whilſt you are alive, your Bodies and Souls, and doubtleſs he will accept them, and confirm the Gift with his own Seal. Here below he will enrich you with his Graces, and crown you at laſt with his Glory. *Bleſſed are they that die in the Lord*; but to die in the Lord we muſt live to the Lord, that we may be able to ſay with St. *Paul, Whether we live, we live to the Lord; whether we die, we die to the Lord; whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.*

To perſuade us to this religious Duty, we muſt conſider, in the firſt Place, the Command that he gives us of loving him, fearing him, repenting of our Sins, and of walking in his holy Laws. Unto this he exhorts us in the Writings of the *Old Teſtament*, as in *Deuteronomy* vi. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might.* And in *Iſa.* viii. *Sanctify the Lord of Hoſts himſelf, and let him be your Fear and your Dread.* And in Ch. iv. *Let the Wicked forſake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* In the iid Chapter of *Joel, Turn ye unto the Lord with all your Heart, and with Faſting, and with Weeping, and with Mourning.* And in the firſt Chapter of *Malachi. A Son honours his Father, and a Servant his Lord: If therefore I am your Father, where is the Honour due unto me? If I am your Lord, where is the Fear of my Name?*

2. *Jeſus Chriſt* is not come to aboliſh the Law, but to fulfil it, *Matt.* v. Therefore, in the *New Teſtament*, he calls upon us frequently to ſtudy Piety and Virtue. As in St. *Matt.* v. *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they, ſeeing your good Works, may glorify your*

Father which is in Heaven. And in the first Chapter of *Mark*, *Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.* And St. *Paul* to the *Romans* in this Manner, *I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable Service; and be not conformed to this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your Mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect Will of God; hate Evil, and cleave to that which is good,* Rom xii. And in Chap. xiii. *Walk honestly as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in Strife and Envying; but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof.* And in 1 *Cor.* xvi. *Awake to Righteousness and sin not.* And in *Ephesians* iv. *Put off, concerning the former Conversation, the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts, and put ye on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness.* And in *Coloss.* iii. *Mortify your Members which are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleanness, inordinate Affections, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness, which is Idolatry.* In 1 *Thess.* v. *Watch and be sober, abstain from all Appearance of Evil.* And in *Philip* iv. *Whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are of good Report, if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, think on these Things.* I might with as much Ease number the Stars of the Sky, as reckon up all the Passages that call upon us, and exhort us to an holy Life.

3. God not only commands us to apply ourselves to Holiness, Justice, and Innocency of Life; but he proposes himself for our Example, that as the obedient and good Children delight to imitate their Father's Virtues, we also might endeavour to copy out in our Lives the divine Perfections of our heavenly Father, and imprint in our Hearts his sacred Image. Therefore in *Levit.* xi. he tells us, *Be ye holy, for I am holy.* And

And St. *Peter* repeats the ſame Paſſage in this Manner, *As he that called you is holy, ſo be ye alſo holy in all Manner of Converſation; for it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy*, 1 Pet. ii. And our Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt* gives us the ſame Leſſon, *Love your Enemies, bleſs thoſe that curſe you, Do good to them that hate you, pray for them that perſecute you, that you may be the Children of your Father that is in Heaven*, Matt. v. *For he cauſeth the Sun to riſe upon the Good and Bad, and ſends his Rain upon the Juſt and Unjuſt; be ye therefore perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect.* The Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſpeaks in the ſame Manner to the *Epheſians*, *Be ye Followers of God as dear Children; put off the old Man, and put on the new Man, which is created according to God in Juſtice and true Holineſs*, Chap. vi. And in *Coloſſ.* iii. *Now put off all theſe, Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blaſphemy, filthy Communication, out of your Mouth. Lye not to one another, ſeeing that ye have put off the old Man with his Deeds, and have put on the new Man which is renewed in Knowledge after the Image of him that created him.*

4. Meditate ſeriouſly upon the excellent and precious Promiſes that God hath given to ſuch as addict themſelves to Piety and good Works. As in *Exod.* xx. *I ſhew Mercy unto a thouſand Generations of them that love me, and keep my Commandments.* And in 1 *Sam.* ii. *I will honour them that honour me.* And in *Iſa.* iii. he ſays to the Righteous, *that it ſhall be well with them; for they ſhall eat the Fruit of their Doings.* And in *Matt.* v. Our Saviour ſaith, *Bleſſed are the pure in Heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* And in Ch. vi. *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, and all theſe Things ſhall be added unto you*, over and above. And in Chap. vii. *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.* St. *Paul* ſpeaks thus to the *Romans*, *If by the Spirit you mortify the Deeds of the Fleſh, you ſhall live*, Ch. viii. And in the firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, *Piety or Godlineſs is profitable to all Things, having the Promiſes of this preſent Life, and of that*

which is to come. And in *Rev.* xx. *Bleſſed and holy is he who hath Part in the firſt Reſurrection; the ſecond Death ſhall have no Power over him.*

5. Conſider that the whole World trembles at the Denunciation of the Judgements, with which God threatens to puniſh all impenitent Sinners, as in *Exod.* xx. *I am the Lord thy God, ſtrong, jealous, viſiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me.* And in 1 *Samuel* ii. *I will honour them that honour me, and will deſpiſe them that deſpiſe me.* And in St. *Matt.* xii. *Of every idle Word that Men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an Account at the Day of Judgement. And in* St. *John* iii. *Except a Man be born of Water and the Spirit,* that is, of a Spirit purifying like Water, *he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* And in *Rom.* viii. *They who are in the Fleſh cannot pleaſe God.* And in 1 *Cor.* vi. *Be not deceived; neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abuſers of themſelves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God.* And the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* is not content to tell us, *That without Holineſs no man ſhall ſee God;* but he ſaith ſomething more, *That if we ſin wilfully, after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a terrible Expectation of Judgement, and fiery Indignation ſhall devour the Adverſaries; for our God is a conſuming Fire,* Chap. x. And in the *Revelations* it is not only ſaid, that in the holy *Jeruſalem* there ſhall no unclean Thing enter, or that commiteth Abomination, or a Lye; and that God will ſhut out the Dogs, the Witches, the Fornicators, the Murderers, the Idolaters and whoſoever doth love or make a Lye, *Chap.* xxi, xxii. But the Spirit of God aſſures us, that the Timorous, that is, ſuch as are more afraid of Man than of God, the Unbelieving, the Execrable and Murderers, the Fornicators and Witches, the Idolaters and Lyars, ſhall have their Portion in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death.

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6. Though we ſhould ſpeak in the Language of Angels, though we ſhould give all our Goods to nouriſh the Poor, and though we ſhould give our Body to be burnt, if we have no Charity, we are but like the ſounding Braſs, and like the tinkling Cymbal. Though we ſhould be able to perform Signs and Wonders, if we be not clothed with Innocency and Holineſs, if we be not adorned with Meekneſs and Love, *Chriſt* will at leaſt treat us as the fooliſh Virgins, with a *Depart from me; I know ye not.* Though we ſhould be able to caſt the Devil out of other Men, it will avail us nothing, unleſs we can caſt him out of our own Hearts, with all the wicked Luſts that he cheriſhes there. To what Purpoſe ſhall ſuch cry out at the great Day, *Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name? Have we not caſt out Devils in thy Name? Have we not done many Miracles in thy Name?* Jeſus will return them this ſad anſwer, *Depart from me, ye Workers of Iniquity.*

7. Conſider that whatſoever be your Portion of the Advantages of this Life, when you ſhall come to die, you ſhall carry away neither your Riches, your Honours, nor your Pleaſures. But if you be rich in Faith, and good Works; if you be clothed with Holineſs, and crowned with Righteouſneſs; if Piety, and the Service of God, be your Delight; you ſhall carry away out of the World this ſpiritual Treaſure, the celeſtial Glory, and this angelical Satisfaction. It is what the Holy Spirit teacheth, when he tells us, *Bleſſed are the Dead that die in the Lord; for they reſt from their Labours, and their Works follow them.*

8. Let us always have before our Eyes the bleſſed Examples of ſo many Saints, who have traced us the Way to Heaven by their Piety and good Works; they are entered into the Paradiſe of God, and the Glory of his Kingdom. It is reported of a Painter, that when he had a Deſign to repreſent an accompliſhed Beauty, he borrowed from divers Objects the Excellencies and Perfections with which he was to adorn his Picture. From the Lilies he took their Whiteneſs, from the

Roſes their red Tincture, from another Object the Wonder of the Eye, from another the Coral of the Lips, and ſo of the other Parts. Likewiſe to reſtore in our Souls, the Image of God defaced by Sin, we muſt borrow the Virtues and Excellencies of primitive Men. For Example, repreſent always to yourſelves *Abel's* Innocency, *Enoch's* holy Life, *Noah's* Juſtice, *Abraham's* Faith, *Lot's* Hoſpitality, *Iſaac's* Obedience, the Faithfulneſs of *Jacob*, the Chaſtity of *Joſeph*, the Patience of *Job*, the Meekneſs of *Moſes*, the Zeal of *Phineas*, the Conſtancy of *David*, the Wiſdom of *Solomon*, the Piety of *Joſias*, the Prayers of *Daniel*, the Tears of *Jeremiah*, the Faſting of *Eſther*, the holy Earneſtneſs of the Woman of *Canaan*, the Devotion of *Cornelius*, the Charity of the *Samaritan*, the Alms of *Dorcas*, and of the poor Widow, the *Publican's* Humility, the *good Thief's* Repentance, the Tears of *Mary Magdalen*, the Weepings of *Peter*, the undaunted Courage of St. *Paul*, and his indefatigable Spirit, and the glorious Martyrdom of St. *Stephen*, and of ſo many noble Souls of all Ages and Sexes, who have gone to the Torments with as much Joy, as to Feaſts and to Triumphs; and who have ſealed with their Blood the Truth of the Goſpel with an undaunted Reſolution. *Seeing therefore that we are encompaſſed with ſo great a Cloud of Witneſſes, let us purſue with Conſtancy the Race that is ſet before us.*

9. Chiefly, *Let us look to Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of our Faith:* For he hath left us an Example, that we might follow his Footſteps. All the Virtues that we admire of thoſe faithful Souls, are but like many little Beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, and a weak Image of his Glory. There is no Fire ſo perfect, but yields a Smoak; no Righteouſneſs ſo accompliſhed, but hath its Imperfections, whilſt we are clothed with this weak Fleſh. The Behaviour of the moſt Holy and Perfect is ſpotted with many Infirmities; but our Lord and Saviour is the Lamb without Spot and Blemiſh, in whoſe Mouth there was no Guile: For it was neceſſary, that they ſhould have ſuch a High-Prieſt, who

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is holy, blameleſs, ſeparated from Sinners. The perfect Image of all Virtues was never found in any mortal Man on Earth; but *Jeſus Chriſt* is the faireſt among the Sons of Men; his Lips are full of Grace; in him alone we have a perfect Model of Virtues, and of all imaginable Perfection. Therefore, when the Apoſtle had perſuaded the *Romans* to renounce the Luſts of the Fleſh, Drunkenneſs, Anger, Envy, and ſuch like Sins, inſtead of making an Enumeration of the Virtues oppoſite to theſe Vices, he thinks it ſufficient to propoſe *Chriſt's* holy Example; *Put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ſaith he, to teach us, that all the Virtues and Graces centre and meet in the ſacred Perſon of our Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*, in the higheſt Degrees of Perfection.

10. We are ſo much the more obliged to imitate *Jeſus Chriſt*, and to imprint in our Hearts his holy Image, becauſe that he is not only our Father, our Lord, our King, but he is alſo the Bleſſed Head of that Body whereof we are Members. It is not proper to unite defiled and profane Members to an Head ſo glorious and ſo holy. Whoſoever gives himſelf over to his Luſts, and delights in the Corruption of Sin, maims, as much as in him lies, that ſacred Body of the Son of God. This Conſideration drew from St. *Paul* this Expreſſion, *Shall I take the Members of Chriſt for to make them the Members of an Whore?*

11. The divine Spirit dwelling in our Hearts, is a great Obligation to Holineſs of Life. Know you not, that you are the Temple of God, and the Holy Ghoſt dwelleth in you? 1 *Cor.* iii. Shall we be ſo baſe as to uncover our filthy and dirty Thoughts before ſo holy and divine a Gueſt? Shall we be ſo bold as to erect, upon his Altar, Idols that may provoke him to Jealouſy? His Eyes are ſo clean and pure, that they cannot ſuffer the Sight of Iniquity and Sin: It is that which moſt afflicts and grieves him. Therefore when St. *Paul* had adviſed the *Epheſians*, *That no corrupt Communication ſhould proceed out of their Mouth, but that which is good*

to the Uſe of edifying, that it may miniſter Grace unto the Hearers, he adds immediately after, *Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are ſealed unto the Day of Redemption.* And if there be any that are not moved with the Preſence of ſuch a glorious Perſon, let him tremble at this fearful Threatening, *If any defile the Temple of God, God will deſtroy him*, 1 Cor. iii.

12. There were two Tables of Stone in the Ark of God's Covenant, where God himſelf had written his Law, which he gave to his People by the Miniſtry of *Moſes*, 1 *Kings* vi. Seeing that the God of all Mercy hath choſen thy Soul to be his Sanctuary, and the Pavilion of his Glory, his ſacred Commandments muſt be there engraven upon the Table of thy Heart; thou muſt be moved with an honeſt Deſire for the Service of God, and for an exact Conformity to his holy Will, that we may be able to ſay to you, what St. *Paul* ſaid to the Chriſtians of his Days, *Ye are manifeſtly declared to be the Epiſtle of Chriſt, written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in the Tables of Stone, but in the fleſhly Tables of the Heart*, 2 Cor. iii. And that thou mayeſt ſay with the Royal Prophet, *My God, my Delight hath been in thy Will; thy Law is within me.*

3. Let us repreſent to ourſelves continually the great and many Obligations that we have to love God, to fear him, to ſerve him. He is the moſt perfect of all Beings, he is Perfection itſelf, infinitely lovely; ſo that, if there were neither Hell to puniſh us, nor Heaven to reward us, he ought to be ſerved and reverenced, becauſe of himſelf and his divine Perfections. This Conſideration cauſed *Jeremiah* to break forth into theſe lofty Expreſſions, *Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations? for to thee doth it appertain; foraſmuch as among all the wiſe Men of the Nations, and in all their Kingdoms, there is none like unto thee*, Jer. x.

14. Whilſt we are travelling here below, we are not capable of any high and celeſtial Meditation. It belongs only to the Angels, whom God hath inveſted with Light and Glory; and to the heavenly Spirits, whom he

he hath admitted to the Contemplation of his Face. Let us therefore ſeriouſly conſider the Bleſſings and Favours which we have received from this great God, who hath created us in his own Image, and who hath made us to be the Maſter-pieces of all his inferior Wonders. He hath put in us the Epitome of the Beauties and Perfections of the World. He hath given us a Being, as to the Sun, Moon, and Stars; a Life, like the Plants; Senſe, as to the Animals; Underſtanding, as to the Angels: In ſhort, he hath infuſed into this Body, faſhioned with his own Fingers, an immortal Soul of an heavenly Subſtance, a Beam of his Glory, and a living Image of his Godhead. My Soul, therefore bleſs the Lord, and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name; my Soul bleſs the Lord, and forget not all his Benefits, *Pſ.* ciii.

It is for Man's Sake God hath ſtretched out the Heavēns, ſettled the Earth, poured out the Waters, and preſcribed Limits to the roaring Sea. For Man's Sake this gracious Creator hath adorned the Heavens with ſuch a Number of beautiful Stars, hath given to the Moon its various Motions, with its wonderful Influences, hath placed in the Sun ſuch a bountiful Source of Light, and hath appointed the invariable Succeſſion of the Seaſons, of the Days, Months, and Years. For Man's Advantage and lawful Recreation, ſo many Birds ſing and fly in the open Air, ſuch a prodigious Number of Fiſhes ſwim in the Sea and Rivers; the Earth is beautified with ſo many delicate Flowers, brings forth ſo many wholeſome Herbs, and pleaſant Fruits, nouriſheth ſo many Kinds of Animals, and ingenders in its Bowels, Gold, Silver, and precious Stones. In a Word, for Man's Sake God has created the World, filled it full of ſo many Riches, and beautified it with ſo many excellent Perfections. Therefore it is no Wonder if the Royal Prophet is raviſhed into an holy Admiration, and burſts forth into theſe Expreſſions; *O God, what is mortal Man, that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man, that thou doſt regard him! Thou haſt made*

made him a little lower than the Angels; thou haſt crowned him with Glory and Honour; thou haſt eſtabliſhed him Governor over the Works of thine Hands; thou haſt put all Things under his Feet, the Sheep and the Oxen, the Beaſts of the Field, the Birds of the Air, and the Fiſhes of the Sea. If the Example of this great Prophet is not able to ſtir you up, and perſuade you to the Fear and Worſhip of God, by the Conſideration of the wonderful Works of the Creation, hear what the Angel declares, that took his Flight through the Middle of the Heavens, having the eternal Goſpel in his Hand; *Fear God, and give him Glory; worſhip him that liveth for ever and ever; for he hath made the Heavens and the Earth, the Sea, and the Fountains of Waters.*

16. We have not only in God our Life, Motion, and Being; but he hath not left himſelf without Witneſs in doing Good, and ſending Rains from Heaven, fruitful Seaſons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladneſs. He nouriſhes us with Manna, and gives us to drink of his Abundance. He overſhadows us with his Protection, and enlightens us with his heavenly Fires. He hath always his Eyes open to our Calamities, and his Ears to our Sighs and Groans. He is always near them that call upon him, yea, them that call upon him faithfully. Let us therefore ſay as *David, I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard the Voice of my Supplication; for he hath inclined his Ear unto me; therefore will I call upon him all the Days of my Life,* Pſal. civ. cxvi.

17. Meditate often upon the Advantages that are common to thee with the reſt of Chriſtians, and upon the Bleſſings and Favours which God hath vouchſafed to any Perſon in particular. Remember how many Times he hath ſent his Aſſiſtance from above, how he hath wrought Miracles to deliver thee from the Evils that threatened thee. Conſider how liberal he hath been to thee in the whole Courſe of thy Life, what admirable and noble Means he hath employed to crown thee with his moſt precious Favour; then thou wilt ſay with *Jacob, O God, I am not worthy of the leaſt of all*

all thy Mercies, and of all the Truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy Servant, Gen. xxxii. And with *David*, *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful Works, which thou haſt done, and thy Thoughts which are to us ward, they cannot be reckoned up in Order unto thee. If I ſhould declare and ſpeak of them, they are more than can be numbered.* And being raviſhed into an holy Admiration, thou wilt ſay in the Language of the ſame Prophet, O God, who is like unto thee, who, when thou haſt made me ſee many Diſtreſſes and Evils, at laſt haſt reſtored me to Life, and drawn me out of the Depths of the Earth? *Pſ.* lxxi. *Thou ſhalt increaſe my Greatneſs again, thou wilt comfort me.* And elſewhere, *What ſhall I render to the Lord, for all the Benefits that he hath done unto me?* Pſal. cxvi.

18. The Conſideration of God's redeeming us, chiefly requires us to deny ourſelves, and conſecrate ourſelves to his Service: for Slaves do not belong to themſelves, but to him who had redeemed them, and paid their Ranſom. As when God had delivered the Children of *Iſrael* from the *Egyptian* Bondage, he gave them his Laws and Ordinances in Mount *Sinai*; thus God hath redeemed us from the Tyranny of the Devil, of the World, of Sin, of Death, of Hell, and from the Power of all his Enemies, that we might ſerve him without Fear, in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, all the Days of our Life, *Luke* i. He hath given himſelf a Ranſom for us, that we might become a peculiar People to him, zealous of good Works, 2 *Tit.* ii. You are bought with a Price; glorify then God in your Bodies, and your Souls that belong to God, 1 *Cor.* vi.

19. One Love muſt kindle another. The ſacred Fire come down from Heaven muſt inflame our Hearts with an holy Zeal for his Glory. God hath had ſo much Love for us, that he hath given his only Son, that believing, we might not periſh, but have everlaſting Life. He hath not ſpared his Son, who is the Brightneſs of his Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon. He hath delivered him to Death for us,

yea, to the ignominious Death of the Croſs. And is it not juſt, that we ſhould love him above all worldly Things, a God ſo good and merciful? Is it not juſt that we ſhould love nothing but him, and for his Sake? Is it not reaſonable, that we ſhould offer unto him our Bodies and Souls as a living and holy Sacrifice, pleaſing to his Eye? And if we have any Luſt that offends him, is it not juſt that we ſhould willingly leave it betimes, when it ſhould appear as uſeful to us as our Hands and Feet, and as dear as the Apple of our Eye? Whoſoever doth not deny himſelf, is not worthy of him, *Matt.* x.

20. We muſt treat the Body of Sin, which the holy Scriptures ſtyle the *old Man*, and the *firſt Adam*, almoſt in the ſame manner, as *Chriſt*, the *new Man*, and the *ſecond Adam*, was treated upon the Croſs, *Rom.* vi. Inſtead of flattering it, and ſeeking to ſatisfy its Luſts, we muſt deprive it of all its Pleaſures, make it drink Vinegar and Gall, tear its Head with Thorns, bind and chain its Affections, and nail them to the Croſs of *Jeſus Chriſt*, with all its inordinate and brutiſh Deſires. *Mortify therefore your Members, that are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiſcence, and Covetouſneſs, which is Idolatry*, Gal. v. Col. iii.

21. To live in Sin, to delight ourſelves in Iniquity, is to fruſtrate, as much as in us lies, our good Lord, from that principal End which he deſigned in leaving for a while the celeſtial Abode of his Glory and Immortality: For he is come into the World to deſtroy the Works of the Devil. Now the chief Work of the Devil, the great Enemy of our Salvation, in which he takes moſt Delight and Glory, is Sin, with which he enſnares Mankind: For by Sin, Death, and all Kind of Calamities, are uſhered into the World. *John* iii. *Rom.* v.

22. It is to trample upon the only Son of God, to affront the Spirit of Grace, and eſteem the Blood of the Covenant a profane Thing. It is to render ineffectual

effectual the Death and Paſſion of our good Redeemer, and pull down his Croſs: For he hath carried our Sins in his Body upon the Croſs, that dying unto Sin, we might live unto Righteouſneſs. He hath given himſelf for his Church, to ſanctify it, and render it a *Glorious Church*, not having Spot or Wrinkle, nor any ſuch Thing. If the Blood of Bulls and of Goats, and the Aſhes of an Heifer ſprinkled, did ſanctify the Uncleanneſs of the Fleſh, how much more ſhall the Blood of *Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without Spot to God, purge your Conſciences from dead Works to ſerve the living God?* Heb. ix.

23. Our Lord and Saviour was not only dead, but alſo buried, to teach us to bury alſo with him our Sins, and ſhut up, in his ſacred Tomb, all our carnal Luſts. Do not you know, all ye that have been baptized into *Jeſus Chriſt*, that you have been baptized into his Death? We are then buried with him in his Death by Baptiſm.

24. This glorious Saviour is riſen from the Dead, and hath left the Sepulchre with his Funeral Attire, to teach us to riſe to Newneſs of Life, and to leave in our Grave the Sin that encompaſſeth us, and the Ties of our Corruption, that bind us ſo faſt. To ſpeak in St. *Paul's* Language, *As Jeſus Chriſt is riſen from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, we alſo ought to walk in Newneſs of Life; for if we are made one Plant with him by a Conformity to his Death, we ſhall alſo be one by a Conformity to his Reſurrection. And as Chriſt, who is riſen from the Dead, dies no more; Death hath no more Dominion over him; likewiſe we ought not to apply our Members, as Inſtruments of Iniquity, unto Sin; but we ought to apply them unto God, as being made alive from the Dead*, Rom. vi. *He is dead, and riſen again, that he might have Dominion over the Dead and the Living. If any be in Jeſus Chriſt, let him be a new Creature. Old Things are paſſed away; behold, all Things are become new*, Rom. xiv. 2 Cor. v.

25. *Jeſus*

25. *Jeſus Chriſt*, after his glorious Reſurrection, aſcended up into Heaven, to lift up thither our Hearts, and to draw thither our Affections; and teach us to reform our Manners, to live an holy, angelical, and celeſtial Life. If you are riſen with *Chriſt*, ſeek thoſe Things that are above, where *Jeſus Chriſt* ſits at the Right-hand of God; think upon Things above, and not upon Things on the Earth, *Coloſ.* iii.

26. There is nothing in the World ſo lovely as Virtue: It is the Delight and Pleaſure of Heaven, the Daughter of the living God, and the true and lively Image of the great Creator. O bleſſed Dreſs of a Chriſtian Soul! O rich and precious Ornament of God's Children! O heavenly Grace! what rare and ſtrong Charms haſt thou, to win the Hearts and Affections of all ſuch as behold thy perfect and divine Beauty!

27. On the contrary, there is nothing ſo ugly and ill-favoured as Sin: It is a woeful Monſter of Hell, and a frightful Image of *Satan*. I confeſs, it diſguiſes itſelf, and takes a beautiful Appearance; but if you lift this borrowed Maſk, you ſhall perceive the Devil's fearful Looks, and the Depths of Hell.

28. Faithful Souls, weigh in the Balance of his Sanctuary that dreadful Evil that Sin has brought into the World. It has blotted out God's Image, and defaced the Beauty of the Creation. It hath ſeparated Heaven and Earth, and kindled a grievous War between God and Man. It is an heavy Burden, under which Nature itſelf groans: For, becauſe of Sin, all Creatures ſigh, and are in Labour until now.

29. It continues yet its woeful Effects: For it is Sin that grieves the Holy Spirit, afflicts the Angels, offends the Weak, hardens the Ignorant, and that gives an Occaſion to the Enemies of God to blaſpheme his holy Name, and curſe his Goſpel, *Rom.* viii. It is Sin that gratifies the Devil, rejoiceth Hell, upholds the tottering Walls of *Babylon*, ſtrengthens the Kingdom of the Prince of Darkneſs, and that cauſeth him to work

work with Efficacy in the Hearts of the Children of Diſobedience, *Eph.* ii.

30. Lift up your Eyes to the Croſs of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and you ſhall perceive how abominable Sin is: For neither in Heaven nor on Earth, could be found an Offering able to make Expiation for it. God hath choſen rather to puniſh it in the Perſon of his only-begotten Son, than to leave it unpuniſhed. O how grievous and deep is the Stain of Sin, ſeeing that nothing but the Blood of a God can waſh and cleanſe it!

31. When you meditate upon the Lord's Death and Paſſion, exclaim not againſt *Judas's* Treaſon, the *Phariſees* Envy, the People's Mutiny; don't lay the Blame upon the Impiety of *Caiaphas*, the Injuſtice of *Pilate*, or *Herod's* Scoffs and Jeſts, nor upon the Cruelty of the *Roman* Soldiers; but be angry againſt your own Sins and let an holy Diſpleaſure riſe in you againſt your Iniquities and Crimes. Say to yourſelves, our Sins, our Sins alone have betrayed *Chriſt's* innocent Body, bound and faſtened the Lord of Glory to this ignominious Croſs, and delivered him into the Executioner's Hands. Our Sins have crowned him with Thorns, nailed him to the Wood, delivered to him Gall and Vinegar to drink. In ſhort, our Sins have pierced his Hands and Feet, and opened his Side. You would abhor the Sight and Acquaintance of the Hangman that would have faſtened your Father to the Gallows, and you would ſcorn to kiſs his bloody Hands. How much more abominable ſhall we be to God, and his holy Angels, if we cheriſh and delight to entertain Sin! whereas we ſhould be ſtirred up againſt it with an holy Zeal and earneſt Deſire of Revenge. Inſtead of nailing to the Croſs this unmerciful Parricide, and cruſhing to Pieces this helliſh Monſter, if we feed and nouriſh it in our Bowels, we ſhall then be guilty of crucifying afreſh the Son of God, and putting him to an open Shame; guilty of trampling him under Feet, and of eſteeming the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith we are ſanctified, an unholy Thing.

32. Con-

32. Consider seriously the fearful Effects that Sin produces in you. Have you never been sensible of the horrid and cruel Torments of a poor Soul disturbed with the Sight of his Crimes? How sharp and piercing are the Remorses of a Conscience awakened from a profane Sleep! It is a Pain, and an Anguish, that cannot be expressed; it causes our Head to dissolve into Water, our Eyes to become a Fountain of Tears; it causes our Blood to be congealed, our Skin to become black, our Bones to be cracked and broken. It is a common Saying, That Punishment follows the Sin close at the Heels; but imagine that it keeps always its Company, and is a Rack and Torture that never leaves the Guilty: For, *There is no Peace for the Wicked, saith my God*, Isa. xlviii.

33. Whereas there is no Satisfaction like to that of a good Christian, who loves his God sincerely, and worships him in Spirit and in Truth; there is no Kind of Delight to be compared to that of a regenerate Soul, that applies itself without Hypocrisy to the Works of Piety and Holiness, *Job*. viii. For the Quiet of the Soul, and the Peace of Conscience are of more Worth than great Treasures, than Sceptres and Crowns. Therefore the wise *Solomon* tells us, that the righteous Man's Heart is a continual Feast, *Prov*. xv. To persuade us that there is nothing like to that hidden Manna, to this spiritual Food, that the World knows not, and to these angelical and divine Pleasures, the holy Apostle informs us, that it is unspeakable and glorious Joy, and a Peace of God that passeth all Understanding, *Phil*. iv.

34. If any Delight or Pleasure accompanies Vice, it is but in Appearance, superficial; as a Dream, it vanisheth away; for the Triumph of the Wicked is of a short Continuance, and the Joy of the Hypocrite is but for a Moment. There is always some Thorn, some Grief hidden and secret; in their Laughter their Heart is afflicted, and their Joy is cut off by Sorrow, *Prov*. xiv.

35. But the holy Joys and celestial Delights of one that fears God, and that worships him in Purity and

Innocency of Life are ſolid and laſting; they caſt a deep Root in the very Bottom of our Hearts, and enter into the Joints and Marrow, and diſperſe themſelves all over the inward Parts. The Gibbets, the Wheels, and the moſt grievous Torments of this Life, cannot pluck theſe Joys from us; but they comfort the Soul in the midſt of the greateſt Diſtreſſes, and heal up the broken Bones.

It is the French *Cuſtom to break notable Offenders upon a Cart-Wheel.*

36. The Worldlings become weary, tired with the Accompliſhment of their Luſts, and are afflicted at their greateſt Succeſs. They loath at laſt all their carnal Sports, and their greateſt Sweetneſs turns into Bitterneſs; we grow out of taſte with the Pleaſures of Sin, ſo that we begin at laſt to abhor them. It is what *Zophar* intends to ſhew us, when, ſpeaking of the Wicked, he ſaith, *His Meat in his Bowels is turned; it is the Gall of Aſps within him: He hath ſwallowed down Riches, and he ſhall vomit them up again; God ſhall caſt them out of his Belly*, Job xx.

37. It is otherwiſe with them who apply their Hearts to the Fear and Service of God, and that find his Yoke eaſy and his Burden light, *Matt.* xi. They take great Satisfaction in the Ways of Righteouſneſs; they run with an holy Freedom to their happy End, and to the Prize of their ſpiritual Calling. The more they drink of the Waters of *Siloah*, the more they thirſt; their Zeal is like an holy Fire, that never ſaith, *It is enough*, *Prov.* x. As the Prophet *Moſes*, after he had been forty Days and forty Nights converſing with God in his holy Mountain, came down with a glorious Countenance, ſhining as bright as the Light, with two Tables of the Law in his Hands; likewiſe a Chriſtian Soul, that hath been lifted up to God by frequent Prayers, and been converſing with him in divine Meditation, cannot hide its ſpiritual Joys, and its unſpeakable Delights; it burns with an earneſt deſire of glorifying God, and of pleaſing him in all Things. When the Apoſtle St. *Peter* ſaw our Saviour transfigured upon Mount *Tabor*, he

was raviſhed and tranſported in ſuch a manner, that he cried out, *Lord, it is good for us to dwell here; let us make three Tabernacles.* Thus the good Chriſtian, who is enlightened from above, is never weary in the Company of God; if he ſhould live ſeveral Ages, he would not believe that he had too much Time to ſerve his Creator, to worſhip his divine Majeſty, and to refreſh himſelf with the unſpeakable Pleaſures of his Preſence. As the Time of *Jacob's* Service ſeemed to him but a few Days, becauſe of the Love that he had to *Rachael*; thus the Days that we ſpend in the Service of God ſeem to be but a few Hours or Moments, in caſe our Love for God be earneſt and ſincere.

38. Repreſent to yourſelves the fearful Curſe denounced againſt the Wicked and Profane, *Gen.* xxix. They carry about them every where the Marks of God's Anger and juſt Revenge; they are the Objects of his Hatred, and odious to the Publick. They who flatter and fawn upon them moſt for their own Advantage, abominate and curſe them in their Hearts; and they who, out of a ſervile Fear, ſeem to honour and worſhip them in the Light of the Sun, would be many times very joyful to dance upon their Graves, and to erect a Gallows to hang them thereon.

39. It is not ſo with good Men; they are honoured by God and Man, and their greateſt Enemies admire their Virtues. Let us be never ſo poor and contemptible in the World, we are rich and noble enough, if we fear God as we ought, and obey his holy Will; for the Fear of the Lord is our chief Treaſure, it is our Crown, our Diadem, and our greateſt Ornament.

40. The wicked Man is frighted and troubled of his own Accord; he trembles in the Midſt of his Guards, and flies when no Man purſues: All Things ſcare him; he is jealous, and diſtruſts his beſt Friends; his Children are ſuſpected; and in the Embraces of his deareſt Wife, he ſlumbers with an unquiet Spirit.

41. It is otherwiſe with a good Man; he marcheth every-where with an Head lifted up, and his Heart rejoiceth

rejoiceth in a perfect Tranquillity of Mind; for there is no Bulwark like that of a good Conſcience: It is like a Wall of Braſs, that divides and withſtands the Batteries of Times and Seaſons. He that fears God is free from all other Fears, *Pſ.* cxxv. The Finger of God, that hath ſettled in his Soul the Dread of his holy Name, baniſhes all other Apprehenſions, *Pſ.* cxii. He is like Mount *Sion*, that cannot be moved; he fears no ill Report; his Soul is firmly fixed upon God; in the Midſt of his greateſt Dangers, and violent Storms, he ſaith with *David*, *The Lord is my Light and my Deliverance; of whom ſhould I be afraid? The Lord is the Strength of my Life; whom then ſhall I fear? O God, thou art a Buckler round about me, my Glory, and the Lifter up of my Head. I have laid myſelf down, I have ſlept, and I have awaked; for the Lord upholds me. I will not fear Thouſands of People, when they ſhall ſet themſelves round about againſt me; when a whole Army ſhall encamp againſt me, my Heart would never fear*, Pſ. xvii.

42. Let the Wicked be never ſo great and honourable, and be never ſo highly advanced in the World, their Fame ſhall periſh eternally. It is to no Purpoſe that they rear up ſtately Trophies, and fill whole Volumes with the remarkable Paſſages of their Lives, making the Marbles to publiſh their Praiſes for whatſoever they do, and to render their Glory eternal; their Name ſhall be always abominable to God and all his holy Angels; and Mankind ſhall never remember it but with Curſes and Deteſtation. Theſe infamous Perſons are like a ſtinking Lamp, that gives Light for a Time; but when it is put out, it yields a moſt odious Stink. They may be alſo compared to certain Devils, that never go out of a Place without leaving an ill Scent behind them.

43. It is not ſo with good Men; their Fame ſhall flouriſh for ever; and like the Palm, the more Men preſs it down, the more it riſes. Their Name is engraven in the higheſt Heaven, in the glorious Temple of Eternity, and it ſhall always be bleſſed by God and the Angels of his Glory. The Example of Chriſ-

tian Virtues shall remain after them, for a Model to their Posterity to imitate. A faithful Christian, whose Soul is sanctified by the Spirit of the Lord *Jesus*, is like the Alabaster Box of Ointment, which, when it was broken and spilt upon our Saviour's Head, was a precious Liquor that perfumed all the Room, for such an one lives after his Death. When his Body is broken and reduced to Ashes, his good Name spreads abroad, to the Glory of God, and the Edification of his Church. *Mary Magdalen's* Perfume filled only the Chamber where they were sitting, and was soon spent; but the sweet Perfume of an innocent and holy Life, fills both Heaven and Earth with a grateful Scent, and continues for ever and ever.

44. I judge, that another powerful Means to withdraw us from Vice, and to induce us to Virtue, is, to represent to ourselves, at every Moment, the Excellency and Dignity of our Calling; to take a Delight in beholding, with the Spiritual Eyes, the white Stone, where our new Name is written, which none knows but he who receives it. It is the noble and high Quality of the Children of God, and of Believers, which he bestows upon none, but upon such whom he hath elected from all Eternity, for the eternal Enjoyment of Bliss in his glorious Kingdom. It is reported of a certain young Prince, that when he had a Design to disgrace himself by lustful Actions and Debauchery, a wise Philosopher reclaimed him from his Wicked Purpose, by telling him, *Remember that thou art a King's Son.* Thus you, Christian Souls, when *Satan*, the Flesh, and the World, shall tempt you to filthy and unjust Actions, or to any other Sin, call to your Mind that you are the Children of the King of Kings. Take great Heed you defile not such a precious Crown; and as our Saviour said to him who should have followed him, but was desirous first to go and bury his Father, *Suffer the Dead to bury the Dead*; likewise we say unto you, devout Souls, who have freely consecrated yourselves unto God, to his Service and Worship,

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caſt away theſe vain and baſe Actions, and all theſe dead Works; leave them to ſuch as are dead in their Treſpaſſes and Sins. But for you, behave yourſelves according to your celeſtial Calling, apply yourſelves to Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, and to the Practice of all other Virtues, as ſuch who were dead, but now are riſen to Life.

45. We muſt continually meditate upon the Holineſs and Purity of our future Abode in Heaven, and the Expectation that we have there, *Rom.* vi. For as *Jeſus Chriſt* is gone to prepare a Place for us in the Houſe of his heavenly Father, *John* xiv. it is but juſt and reaſonable that we ſhould fit and prepare our Souls for ſuch holy and glorious Manſions, *Rev.* xxi. It is not poſſible to go to Heaven by treading in the Paths of Hell. Nothing impure nor filthy ſhall enter into the holy City, the new *Jeruſalem*. As in *Solomon's* Temple there was no Way to the Holy of Holies, but through the Sanctuary; thus, if we will one Day enter into the heavenly Sanctuary where *Chriſt* dwells, the true Ark of the Covenant, and the Mercy-ſeat, *Eph.* ii. it is abſolutely neceſſary, that we ſhould tread in the Path of good Works, which God hath prepared that we ſhould walk in them, *Tit.* ii. It is upon this Conſideration that St. *Paul* grounds the Exhortation to Piety and Chriſtian Virtues; *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World, looking for that bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works; ſeeing that we have ſuch Promiſes, let us cleanſe ourſelves from all Filth of the Fleſh and Spirit; finiſhing our Sanctification in the Fear of God,* 1 Cor. vii. St. *John* makes uſe of the ſame Reaſon, to perſuade us to Holineſs; *Beloved, we are now the Children of God, but what we ſhall be doth not yet appear; now we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall*

see him as he is; and whosoever hath this Hope in him, let him purify himself as he is pure, 1 John ii. The Apostle St. *Peter* employs the same Consideration to kindle in our Hearts this pure and celestial Fire: *We, according to his Promise, look for new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness. Wherefore, Beloved, seeing that ye look for such Things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in Peace, without Spot and blameless*, 2 Pet. iii.

46. You know, Christians, that God created our first Parents after his own Image and Likeness, before he brought them in his terrestrial Paradise. There is great Reason that this divine Image should be reprinted in our Souls, before we enter into the celestial Paradise. Unto this the Apostle has a Regard, when he tells the *Ephesians*, *Be ye renewed in the Spirit of your Mind, and put on the new Man, created according to God in Righteousness and Holiness*, Chap. iv.

47. If the Place of our future Abode, unto which we are designed, requires from us Sanctification, the Quality of the Persons with whom we shall spend an Eternity, doth no less oblige to the same Behaviour; for they shall be Angels of Light, and the blessed Saints, who have washed and whitened their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb, *Rev.* v. is a glorious Church that hath neither Spot nor Wrinkle, nor any such Thing, *Rev.* v. It is the Spouse of the Son of God, clothed in fine Linen, clean and white, which is the Righteousness of Saints, *Rev.* xix. St. *Paul* had this same Consideration, when he saith, *That we are Fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God; and that our Conversation ought to be as becometh Citizens of Heaven.* To wean us from the filthy Deeds of the Flesh, and from the profane Disposition of *Esau*, he employs the same Reason to persuade us, in *Heb.* x. *You are come*, saith he, *to Mount* Sion, *to the City of the living God, the celestial* Jerusalem, *to the Thousands of Angels, and to the Assembly and Church of the First-born, who are written in Heaven, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect.*

48. As

48. As the Child in its Mother's Womb begins to live there the ſame Life that it leads when it is come into the World; ſo likewiſe a Chriſtian ought to begin to live in the ſame manner upon Earth, as he hopes to live for ever in Heaven. If we will live and reign with *Chriſt* above in his Kingdom, we muſt at preſent have him live and reign in our Hearts here below by Faith.

49. The chief Happineſs of Man conſiſts not only in the true Knowledge of God, and of him whom he hath ſent to ſave us, or in the ſpiritual Peace, or celeſtial Tranſports of the Holy Spirit; but it conſiſts in Holineſs, without which none ſhall ſee God, *Job* xvii. *Rom.* v. Therefore the Apoſtle enquires of the *Romans* of his Time, *What Fruit had you in thoſe Things whereof ye are now aſhamed? But now being free from Sin, and become the Servants of God, ye have your Fruit unto Holineſs, and the End everlaſting Life*, Heb. xii. Rom. ix.

50. I find alſo that this is a very good Remedy to keep yourſelves free from the Debaucheries and Corruptions of the Age; to abſtain from the Company and Acquaintance of vicious Perſons: For as he who touched Things unclean, became thereby unclean; and as ſuch as haunt among the Sick of a Plague are infected with their Diſeaſe; likewiſe it is the Property of evil Company to corrupt the beſt Manners, 2 *Cor.* xv.

51. Whereas we ſhould earneſtly covet the Acquaintance of good Men, and delight in the Society of ſuch, who, like the Seraphims, excite and inflame one another to glorify God, and ſing forth his Praiſes; we muſt frequent ſuch whom we deſire to reſemble: For as *Jacob's* Sheep brought forth Lambs, ſpotted and marked, as the Rod upon which they caſt their Eyes; thus, if we had our Eyes fixed upon the holy Examples of Piety and Virtue, we ſhall ſee ourſelves inſenſibly transformed into their Image and Reſemblance. We ought to take Pleaſure in their Company, with whom we hope to live for ever in the higheſt Heavens.

52. The moſt powerful and moſt effectual Motive to oblige us to the Practice of Piety and Holineſs, and Purity of Life, is to look with the Eye of Faith upon him who is inviſible, and to repreſent to ourſelves the great World as a large Temple where he dwells. Let the Voice that *Moſes* heard out of the burning Buſh ſound continually in our Ears and in our Mind; *Put off thy Shoes from thy Feet, for the Place where thou ſtandeſt is holy Ground*, Exod. iii. Caſt off there thy baſe and earthly Affections, and renounce thy ſottiſh and filthy Luſts; for thou art always before my Eyes, that are too clean and pure to ſuffer the Sight of Evil, and the Place where thou ſtandeſt is ſanctified by my Preſence, *Heb.* i. Remember that I ſee thine Heart, that I ſearch thy Reins, and that I read thy moſt ſecret Thoughts, *Rev.* ii. Chriſtian Souls, imagine that God calls unto you from Heaven continually, as he did unto *Abraham*, *Walk before me, and be perfect*, Gen. xvii. Let therefore the dread of this divine Majeſty ſeize upon thee, and poſſeſs thee. When *Potiphar's* Wife tempted chaſte *Joſeph* to defile himſelf with Adultery, ſhe perceived nothing in the Room but this Object of her Luſt; but this holy Man ſaw the glorious Godhead between him and this laſcivious Woman. He perceived God's Eye, that penetrates into the greateſt Depths. This drew from him this Expreſſion, *How can I do this Wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God!* Thus, if our Fleſh tempt us, and if the Vicious and Profane incite us into ſecret and ſhameful Retreats, to ſhare in their filthy Crimes, let us then remember, that God is everywhere; and whereſoever we hide ourſelves, God hath an Ear to hear us, and Eye to ſee us, and an Hand to record all our Deeds, Words, and Thoughts. God is all Ear, all Eye, and all Hand. He diſcovers us as eaſily under the dark Shadows of the Night, as at Break of Day. He ſpies us through our Fig-leaves, and beholds us under our moſt ſubtle Diſguiſes. He underſtands our moſt inward Thoughts, and liſtens to the ſilent Language of our Hearts. He ſearcheh into all the

the Cloſets of our Souls, and into the Foldings and Windings in our Conſciences. In a Word, all Things are naked and open to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do. An ancient Philoſopher perſuadeth ſuch as deſired to be virtuous, to chuſe ſome grave and virtuous Perſon for their Example, to repreſent him always in their Preſence, and to live as in his Sight, [*Seneca.*] We need not repreſent to ourſelves imaginary Appearances; for in every Place where we are, and whatever we do or think, we are always in the Sight of the Holy of Holies, who is both our Witneſs and our Judge. It was *David's* Meditation, when he cried out, *O Lord, whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit? or whither ſhall I go from thy Preſence? If I mount up to Heaven, thou art there: If I go down into the Pit, thou art there alſo: If I take the Wings of the Morning and fly to the uttermoſt Parts of the Sea, there ſhall thine Hand guide me, and thy Right-hand uphold me. If I ſay, the Darkneſs ſhall cover me, behold, the Night ſhall be like Light round about me; Darkneſs ſhall not hide me from thee, and the Night ſhall ſhine as the Day; the Night and the Day are to thee alike.*

53. If the Devil and the World have enſnared us in their Nets, and if we have been unhappily lulled aſleep in the Boſom of ſome deceitful Pleaſure; this Conſideration alone, that God ſees and underſtands us, is able to awake us with an holy Dread and Fear. Let therefore the Words of St. *Paul* ſound continually in our Ears, *Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the Dead, and Chriſt ſhall enlighten thee*; or, *Awake to Righteouſneſs and ſin not*; Eph. v. 1 Cor. xv. Truly, if we be not ſtupefied and beſotted above Meaſure, this dreadful Voice, that God thunders from Heaven, is able, not only to awake us from the Sleep of Iniquity, but alſo to oblige us to cry out with *Jacob, God is here, and I knew it not! O how dreadful is this Place! It is the Houſe of God, it is the Gate of Heaven*, Gen. xxviii. As ſoon as *Peter* had taken notice of our Saviour's Look, that he caſt upon him, he went out of the High-Prieſt's Hall, and wept bitterly

bitterly for his Apoſtacy. Thus if we could but perceive and acknowledge that God caſts his Eyes continually upon us, we ſhould repent of our Vices, and our Hearts would quickly melt in Tears of Contrition.

54. They who have a powerful and malicious Enemy to watch over them, and to catch at ſomething to accuſe them before the Judge, that they may be condemned, are always upon their Guard; and nothing is able to induce them to utter a Word, or commit an Action that may give an Advantage. No Enemy is more powerful and malicious than *Satan*, who continually eyes us, that he may accuſe us before God, and draw us into Hell. For that Reaſon he is named, *Revelat.* xii. *The Accuſer of the Brethren, who accuſeth them before God Day and Night.* It is probable he regiſters all our idle Words, and wicked Deeds, to produce them before God's Throne, when the Books ſhall be opened, and he ſhall render unto every one according to his Works. Take heed, therefore, Chriſtians, of the dreadful Accuſer, of this mortal Enemy of your Salvation. Give him not Cauſe to rejoice at your Ruin, or to triumph at the Loſs of your Souls. To this the Apoſtle exhorts us, *Epheſ.* iv. *Give no Place to the Devil.*

55. And becauſe it is ſometimes neceſſary to reſtrain ourſelves with an holy Awe, and to withdraw ourſelves out of Luſt, as out of the Fire; you religious Souls, keep always in your Mind a ſhort Account of the Judgments of God, that have been inflicted from time to time upon all Manner of Sinners. Conſider how God dealt with the heavenly Spirits, who did not keep their original Purity; they are reſerved for utter Darkneſs, and for eternal Chains, until the great Day of Judgment; and ſay unto yourſelves, If God hath not ſpared the apoſtate Angels, will he ſpare Man, that rebels againſt him, and offends him with Delight? Remember the dreadful Fall of our firſt Parents, who, although they had been faſhioned with God's own Hand, and inſtructed by him, have loſt both themſelves and

their

their Poſterity, by liſtening to the deceitful Suggeſtions of the old Serpent. Caſt your Thoughts upon the firſt wicked World, which was deſtroyed by a Deluge; and upon the Cities of *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*, upon whom fell the Fire and Brimſtone of God's hot Diſpleaſure. Look upon *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, overwhelmed with all their Pride, in the Waves of the *Red Sea*. Conſider the three Thouſand that were killed with the *Levites* Sword, becauſe of the Idolatry of the Golden Calf; and the four-and-twenty Thouſand, whom a ſudden Death ſwept away, becauſe thy went a whoring after *Baal-Peor*. Look with Fear upon the burning Serpents in the Wilderneſs, that caſt their Poiſon upon the Murmurers againſt God, and their Superiors; upon the Earth that opened its Mouth to ſwallow *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; upon thoſe heavenly Flames that conſumed *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who offered ſtrange Fire unto the Lord; upon the Bears who went out of the Foreſt to devour two-and-forty young Raſcals who mocked *Eliſha*; upon the Lion that devoured the Prophet that diſobeyed God's Command, and hearkened to a lying Brother. In ſhort, caſt your Eyes with Aſtoniſhment upon *Nebuchadnezzar* feeding among the Beaſts of the Field, *Jezebel* eaten up by Dogs, *Herod* conſumed with Worms, and the rich Miſer burning in the Flames of Hell, *Dan.* iv. 2 *Kings* ix. *Acts* xii. *Luke* xvi.

56. Above all Things think upon the laſt Judgment, and conſider this laſt Day, in which we muſt all appear before the Jugment-ſeat of *Chriſt*, to receive in our Bodies that which we ſhall have done, whether it be Good or Evil. Remember that in this dreadful Day God will bring to Light the hidden Things of Darkneſs; the ſecret Contrivances and Thoughts of the Heart. Before this Throne of Fire the Books ſhall be opened; not only God's Books, where all our Sins and Impieties are regiſtered, but alſo the Books of our Conſciences, where the frightful Image of all our Crimes ſhall appear. In the Day of his glorious Coming, the Heavens

shall melt, the Elements shall be dissolved, the Earth and all its Works shall be burnt with Fire, and every Man shall give an Account of every idle Word; how much more of every wicked Action and profane Discourse! *Matt.* v. 12.

57. That we may not be confounded nor ashamed in the dismal Day, in which God will judge the World by the Man whom he hath ordained; let us be inwardly persuaded, that it is not sufficient to abstain from outward Sins, but we must also hate, and inwardly abhor them, *Acts* xvii. For as the Leopard in Chains leaves not his Skin nor his Spots, and changes not, for all his Restraint, his rapacious and cruel Nature, for he continues still a Leopard; and as a Thief in Fetters, shut up in a Dungeon, remains a Thief in his Heart: Likewise such as abstain from exterior Sins only for Fear of Man and the Severity of the Laws, are nevertheless esteemed vicious and abominable in the Sight of God and of his holy Angels, if every Time that he thinks upon his Crimes, he is not moved with a true Contrition, and abhors them with all his Heart. The best Means to render our Conscience whole, is to tear it in Pieces with the Sorrows of Repentance.

58. It is not sufficient to abstain from Thoughts, Words, and Actions, that God prohibits; but we must also apply ourselves to the Study of true Piety, of Virtue, and generally to all the good Works that God requires: For as the Praise and Honour of a good Bowman is never bestowed upon one who hath only the Skill of not breaking his Bow, his Arrows, and his Quiver, but to him who strikes the Mark, and aims well; and as he is not able to become a good Artist, who works not ill, because he doth nothing at all; but he who works well, and shews excellent Pieces of Workmanship: Likewise he is not to pass for a good and religious Christian, who only abstains from Evil, and commits no outward Sins, but he that doth Good, and applies himself to Virtue. Every Tree that bringeth not forth Fruit, although it bear no evil Fruit,

Fruit, is hewn down and caſt into the Fire, *Matt.* iii. Our Saviour curſed the Fig-tree, not becauſe it brought forth evil Fruit, but becauſe it brought forth no good Fruit, but was altogether barren. The wicked Servant was caſt into utter Darkneſs, where there is Weeping and Gnaſhing of Teeth, not becauſe he had loſt or miſ-ſpent his Talent, but becauſe he had not employed it well, and turned it to his Lord's Advantage, *Mat.* xxv. Not only ſuch ſhall be condemned to the Flames prepared for the Devil and his Angels, who afflict God's Children on Earth, and ſpill the Blood of his Servants; but ſuch as have not clothed his Members, viſited and comforted them, and given them to eat and drink. In ſhort, if you enquire from the rich Miſer, how he comes to be condemned to Hell, or tortured in the Flames, he will not tell you, it was becauſe he took what was not his own, or becauſe he committed Murders, Violences, and other horrid Deeds, but he lived without Charity, and had not Pity on the Poor.

59. And as God requires that we ſhould proceed daily forward, until we come to the Meaſure of the perfect Stature in our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, we muſt very frequently take a View of our former Life, and feel the Pulſe of our Luſts, to ſee whether they be not more fervent and violent than before, whether the old Man continued to decline, and how much we have gained upon our wicked Affections, and reformed our corrupt Diſpoſitions: For as thoſe that ſwim againſt the Stream, if they ſlack but a little, are carried downwards by the Violence of the Current; likewiſe if we employ not all our Strength to ſwim up to our heavenly Source, Integrity, and Perfection, the Torrent of our Luſts and of evil Cuſtoms will force us down into the deep Abyſs of Death, and eternal Deſtruction. We muſt therefore examine, every Day, what Progreſs we have made in Piety and Holineſs; and whether ſince ſo many Years that God ſpeaks to us, and inſtructs us to diſcover what is pleaſing to him,

if

if we have more Piety, Zeal; and Charity, and more Holineſs than before, we muſt imitate the ſollicitous Care of ſuch as have tranſplanted ſome rare Plant of the *Eaſt* into this *Northern* Climate; they have always their Eye upon it, to take Notice of every Thing that happens to it. We muſt propoſe for our Example a Steward, having a great Account to make up, who looks often on his Memorials and Regiſters. An Heathen Philoſopher was highly praiſed, becauſe he never laid himſelf down to ſleep, until he had well examined what Progreſs he had made in Philoſophy and moral Virtue: Likewiſe a good Chriſtian ſhould never caſt himſelf upon his Bed to ſleep at Night, until he hath ſeriouſly conſidered how he hath proceeded forward in Piety and the Love of God. In a word, a true Chriſtian by this means ſhall never be leſs alone, than when he is alone; for then he ſhall entertain himſelf with his God, and ſhall diſcover unto him his Heart, and his moſt ſecret Thoughts. Then he ſhall ſpeak ſeriouſly unto his Soul, and ſhall examine exactly his Conſcience. Then he will look to his wicked Deeds, to weep and lament for them with Tears of ſincere Repentance. Then he will caſt himſelf upon the infinite Mercy and Goodneſs of God, to embrace it with a lively Faith and Aſſurance. Then he will make a Reflection upon God's Commands, to walk in them with an holy Zeal and Earneſtneſs all the Days of his Life.

60. Amongſt the Directions that I intend to give to him that deſires to apply himſelf to the Practice of Piety, and to abandon Vice, I muſt not forget this Advice, that he muſt never ſatisfy his carnal Luſts and Pleaſures, but he ſhould rather check and bridle them; for when we grant them what they crave, we are ſo far from extinguiſhing theſe feveriſh Flames and ſatisfying theſe helliſh Longings, that we do but increaſe and encourage them the more. As he that loves Money is not ſatisfied with Money, and as the Ambitious is never exalted high enough in Honour; thus the luſtful Worldling is never contented with the fulleſt Enjoy-

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ment of carnal Pleaſures. It is a Fire that kindles another, and a Flame that never ſaith, *It is enough*. Theſe filthy Luſts are like the Serpent that ſtings the Boſom of the Perſon who warms it in his Breaſt; or as the Furnace of *Babylon*, that burnt up thoſe who firſt kindled it: So ſuch as entertain the Flames of their fleſhly Luſts, keep in their Boſoms a Fire, that will at laſt burn and totally conſume them.

61. We muſt reſiſt the firſt Motions of the Fleſh with the Shield of Faith; extinguiſh the firſt inflamed Darts of the Devil: For it is very eaſy to put out the firſt Sparkle of an increaſing Fire; but if we neglect or cheriſh it, it may come to be a fearful Burning. And as we can without Pain pluck up with one Hand a young Tree planted but a few Days; but if we ſuffer it to take Root and to get Strength, we ſhould not be able to pull it with both Hands, but muſt be forced to employ the Axe, the Wedge, and the Saw: Likewiſe, if we reſiſt Sin in its Beginning, we ſhall eaſily overcome and tame it; we ſhall extinguiſh, without Difficulty, theſe firſt Beginnings of a ſtrange Fire; and we ſhall pluck up with eaſe this bitter Plant, that will grow up to our Sorrow. But if we ſuffer this infernal Fire of Luſt to increaſe, all the Water of the Sea will not be able to extinguiſh it; and if we give Leave to this curſed Plant to grow, it will never be plucked up without much Sweat and Labour. Sin never begins as it ends, and diſcovers not all its Poiſon at once. As the Child in its Mother's Womb is not made in an Inſtant; thus this Monſter of *Satan* is formed by Degrees; one Chain of Hell is linked into another. When Luſt hath conceived, it brings forth Sin. From the thoughts proceed the Suggeſtion, and from the Suggeſtion Pleaſure and Delight, and from Delight Conſent, and after Conſent follows the Deed, which begets the Habit. From thence the Sinner proceeds to be hardened in a Cuſtom of Sin. Thus the Devil aggravates his tyrannical Yoke, and ſtrengthens the Chain by which he drags us into eternal Damnation.

62. As

62. As among the Planets there is always one that ruleth, and causeth his influence to be felt upon Earth, more than the rest; thus, among Sins and Lusts, there is always some one or other that sways in us, unto which we are more addicted than to the rest: This therefore we must chiefly take heed of. Here we ought to discover our Strength and Industry, for fear that the Devil should employ it as a Means to enter into our Souls, and establish there his Tyranny. We must imitate the wise valiant Captains, who having a Place to defend against a vigilant and an active Enemy, fortify the Places that are naturally the weakest, and furnish them with the best Soldiers, causing there a watchful and continual Guard to be kept. Christian Souls, be sure you take all the Armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil Day, and having overcome all, that you may continue stedfast, *Eph.* vi.

63. We ought not to neglect any Sin, nor imagine that there are some light and inconsiderable ones that God regards not; for a little Leaven seasons and leavens the whole Lump, and the least dead Fly corrupts and causeth several Confections to bubble up and spoil. The least Scratch may cause a feverish Inflammation, and but a little Poison can lay us in our Graves. The Devil cares not by what Gates he enters into our Souls, and by what Tie he takes hold of our Hearts. Thus the cursed Serpent slides through the least and narrowest Crannies and Holes of the House, as well as through the widest Gates. Christian Souls, give no Place to the Devil, but shut your Ears to all Enchantments.

64. We must not only always eschew all Manner of Sins, and abstain from all Appearance of Evil; but for our better Security, that we may not endanger our Salvation, we must take heed of all those Things whereof our Souls are doubtful, and about which our Consciences cannot be satisfied. We must never do any Thing, but we ought first to be fully persuaded, that it is acceptable to God, and agreeable with his holy Will; for *whatsoever is done without Faith, is Sin.*

65. As

65. As they who intend to ſtop the Current of a running Water, are wont to cut for it a new Channel; ſo if your vicious Luſts and Paſſions are too violent, you muſt divert them, and propoſe to yourſelves new and freſh Objects. Are you choleric? Be angry, and ſin not: Fret and fume againſt your own Sins and Luſts, and cruſh in Pieces theſe Children of *Belial*. Are you oppreſſed with Sadneſs and Grief? Let the Cauſes of your Sadneſs be your Offences againſt God, and the Scandals of his Church. Are you furious and violent? Remember to be of the Number of thoſe Perſons who take the Kingdom of God by Violence. Are you inclined to Covetouſneſs? Covet and be greedy of the Riches and Treaſures of Heaven, *Matt.* x. Are you lifted up with ambitious Thoughts? Let your Ambition's Aim be to raiſe you upon the immortal Throne, and to attain to the incorruptible Crown of Glory. Are you luſtful, and given to your Pleaſures? Labour to enjoy the divine and raviſhing Delights of the Holy Spirit, and meditate often upon the eternal Pleaſures that are reſerved for you in Heaven.

66. Devout Souls, who ſigh and groan for your Infirmities, who labour to attain to Perfection, apply yourſelves to read and meditate upon God's holy Word with a religious Attention; and before you enter into this holy Lecture, ſay with the Prophet *David*, *Lord, open mine Eyes, and I ſhall ſee the Wonders of thy Law*, Pſal. cxix. Intreat your great God to open your Hearts, as he did *Lydia's*, to receive this incorruptible Seed of your Regeneration, and that he may give you a filial Obedience, *Acts* xvi. In ſuch a Caſe, as ſoon as you ſhall hear the Lord's Voice, you will find your Soul inflamed with his holy Love, 1 *Pet.* i. When we only behold a beautiful Countenance, we become not more beautiful thereby; nor do we take from it its excellent Features, 2 *Corinth.* iii. But it is otherwiſe with us, who behold, as in a Glaſs openly, the Glory of the

Lord; we are transformed thereby into the same Image of his Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

67. Take Pleasure to meditate often upon God's wonderful Works, and to sing forth his Praises. The spiritual Songs inspired by the Holy Ghost commonly appease all the evil Motions of our Mind, and beget in us an holy Joy and celestial Peace. As when *Saul* was tormented with a wicked Spirit, *David* was appointed with his Harp to play before him, and by that Means quieted his troubled Mind; likewise when Hatred, Anger, Revenge, Covetousness, Ambition, or Lust, or any other of the unruly Passions, which are as many evil Spirits, disturb and torture our Souls within us, we must seek a Remedy from *David's* Harp, and sing unto the Lord in Spiritual Songs and Hymns.

68. We ought carefully to attend at the public Exercise of Devotion, and not leave off the Assembling of ourselves together, as the Manner of some is; for where there are but two or three met together in the Name of *Jesus Christ*, he is there in the Midst of them. St. *Thomas*, who was not with the Apostles when *Christ* first appeared among them, lost the Comfort then of seeing him risen from the Dead. And if this merciful Redeemer had not had Compassion on him, he had perished in his Unbelief for ever. If upon the Day of *Pentecost* any of the Faithful had been found absent from the holy Company of the Faithful in *Jerusalem*, they had not seen the glorious Appearance of the Holy Ghost. Who knows but, in a Sermon that we have neglected, we have lost some pious Advice, some seasonable Exhortation, by which God might have brought our Hearts to Repentance? Who knows but, instead of the Fire that devours us, we might have felt the holy Flames kindled in us, like unto those Flames of the burning Bush, that would burn in us, and not consume us? Who knows but, at the breaking up of the Assembly, we might have said, as the two Disciples of *Christ*, going to *Emmaus*, *Did not our Hearts burn within us when he spake to us, and opened the Scriptures?*

69. We muſt be fervent, zealous, and perſevering in Prayer, and other holy Duties, and embrace our Lord and Saviour with the Arms of Faith and Repentance, and ſay unto him, as *Jacob*, *I will not leave thee until thou haſt bleſſed me.* Chiefly, we ought to apply ourſelves to theſe holy Exerciſes, when we feel the inward and troubleſome Strugglings of the Fleſh againſt the Spirit. We ſhould imitate the virtuous Woman, who feeling two Children ſtirring in her Womb, fell to her Prayers, and unburdened her Sorrows in the Boſom of our heavenly Father. And as St. *Peter*, when he began to ſink, lifted up his Hands and Voice, *Lord ſave me*, Matt. xiv. likewiſe we, who walk upon this dangerous Sea of the World, as ſoon as we find ourſelves ſinking into carnal Delights, or as ſoon as the Waves of vicious Examples and dangerous Cuſtoms overpower us, let us cry out from the Bottom of our Hearts, O merciful God, ſtretch out thine Hand from above, and deliver me from theſe Waters of Hell, that carry me away; accompliſh thy Virtue in mine Infirmities, and give me Grace, in reſiſting againſt Sin, to reſiſt unto Blood, *Pſalm* lxix. *Heb.* v. Let thine Holy Spirit overcome mine; let Heaven command the Earth, and let Paradiſe lead Hell in Triumph. If we make this Petition with all our Hearts, God will grant it from his holy Sanctuary. He will extinguiſh the Fire that burns us. He will ſhut the Lion's Mouth that is ready to devour us. He will appeaſe the Winds and Storms, that the Devils have raiſed in us; and at his firſt Entrance into our Ship, toſſed up and down with Fears and Apprehenſions, he will bring Peace and a bleſſed Tranquillity, and will lead us to the ſafe Haven of eternal Happineſs. As *Moſes*, when he had been familiar with God, came down from the Mountain with a ſhining Countenance; and as our Saviour, when he was in Prayer upon Mount *Tabor*, was transfigured, his Garments were white as the Light, and his Face appeared as glorious as the Sun; likewiſe, if we lift up ourſelves above all

theſe earthly and corruptible Things, and pray to God, with an holy Earneſtneſs and Zeal, we ſhall ſee, that our Souls ſhall be thereby clothed with Holineſs, and full of Glory and Light. They will be transformed into the bleſſed Image of the great God, whom we adore; for as ſoon as we behold him, we ſhall become enlightened.

70. To the End we may tame this Body, and that we may reduce it to Obedience, and overcome all our wicked and dangerous Luſts, *Pſal.* lxxi. 12. it is neceſſary that we ſhould add Faſting to our Prayers. We muſt not always expect a Time appointed by the Rulers of our Church upon ſolemn Occaſions; but we muſt preſcribe to ourſelves a Faſt, according as we ſhall ſee it expedient and uſeful: For if this Fleſh be unruly and rebellious againſt God, and his holy Laws; if Eaſe and Plenty encourage its Impurities and Inſolence; let us deprive it of its Food and Dainties, labour to mortify it by Faſtings and Abſtinence, and remember what our Saviour *Chriſt* ſaith in the Goſpel, *That there are ſome evil Spirits, that are not to be driven out but by Faſting and Prayer*, Matt. xxvii.

71. If God gives us Grace to overcome Sin, and mortify our Luſts by fervent and earneſt Prayers, by auſtere Faſtings, by the bitter Tears of Repentance, and by the Aſſiſtance and Bleſſing of his divine Spirit upon our Devotions; take heed, that ye become not careleſs and negligent in good Works. Deceive not yourſelves, religious Souls, and be not ſurprized; for many times the old Man looks as if he were dead, that we might not offer to ſtrike him again to the Heart, that he may recover more Strength. There is always in the Aſhes ſomething of that infernal Fire, that is able to do much Miſchief. Luſt is not rooted out ſo entirely, but that there remain ſome Strings in our Hearts that may grow again. This Source of Iniquity is not ſo dry but that it may run afreſh. As during the Time of Peace, Men prepare new Armour for War, and exerciſe themſelves at Tilts and Tournaments;

ments; likewiſe during the Calm and Reſt of our Souls, we muſt prepare ſome Armour for our ſpiritual Warfare. And as it is not ſufficient to win a Place by Aſſault, and to drive out the Enemy's Forces, but we muſt alſo watch Day and Night, and keep a conſtant and a ſtrong Guard, that we may not be ſurprized and overcome; thus when we have forced out the Devil, and baniſhed him out of our Hearts, we muſt be always upon our Guard, and ſtop all the Avenues, for fear that the evil Spirit ſhould come upon us, accompanied with ſeven worſe Spirits, and that our laſt Condition ſhould be worſe than the firſt.

72. To theſe Works of Piety and Devotion, in which we cannot be always employed, we muſt remember to add a lawful Calling; for Idleneſs is the Mother of all Vices: When we are doing nothing, the Devil prompts us to Evil. This befel *David*, a Man after God's own Heart, when he gave himſelf over, contrary to his former Practice, to baſe Idleneſs; whilſt he was looking in his Neighbour's Houſe, the Devil entered into his Heart, and with the Aſſiſtance of a filthy Object, inflamed his Soul with an unlawful Luſt. As the Iron that is not uſed becomes ruſty, as the ſtanding Water putrifies, and the Earth that is not manured begets Inſects, and venomous Serpents; likewiſe a Soul that is not employed, is ſoon covered over with the Ruſt of Vice. It is eaſily dragged along into the Corruption of the Age, and apt to beget and bring forth Monſters. Therefore the Prophet *Ezekiel* examines the very Beginning and firſt Spring of *Sodom's* Sin, ſaying, *That it was the Plenty of Bread, Eaſe, and Idleneſs*, Ezek. xvi. Chriſtians, if you deſire to keep your Souls pure and undefiled, that the Holy Spirit may reign in them, give no Entertainment to the Devil: Let him find you always well employed, and let him never ſee you at Leiſure to aſſault you with his helliſh Temptations, *Eph.* iv.

73. After all, we muſt ſeriouſly think upon Death, and repreſent it always before our Eyes: For as a

Pilot, to govern and steer a Ship, ought to be at the Stern, and sit at the Helm; so, to govern the Course of this Life as we ought, we must consider our latter End, live always as if we were ready to die, and to breathe forth the last Gasp. Therefore this Sentence is worthy to be engraven upon Cedar in golden Characters, *Whatever thou sayest, and whatever thou doest, remember thy latter End, and thou shalt never sin*, Ecclus vii;

Wonder not, Christian Souls, if in this Treatise, where I am to furnish you with Remedies against the Fears of Death, I would have Death itself to be a Remedy against Sin; for these Things are united and linked together, or rather they hold one another by the Hand: For as a good and holy Life is a safe Preparation to a happy Death; likewise Death is a strong Motive to oblige you to live well: For there is none, unless it be a brutish and desperate Varlet, but at the Hour of Death laments at the Consideration of his former wicked Life, and grieves that he hath not applied himself to the Fear of God, and to the Practice of Christian Virtues. If a Malefactor, after he is condemned to die, and has heard the Sentence of his Doom, did mind nothing but Drinking and Playing, instead of Prayer and Repentance, by which such an one is to dispose himself to go to God, every one would wonder at him as at a Monster and a Madman: Likewise, if we consider as we ought, that Death is certain and unavoidable, that God hath pronounced the Sentence in his Anger, and that none shall be excepted; this will be able to recall us from Vice, and persuade us to Holiness, without which none shall see God, *Heb.* xii. Therefore at every Moment, when *Satan*, the World, and our own Flesh, entice us to any evil Action, let us think within ourselves, Would I have Death find and seize upon me in this Employment? Am I in a good Disposition to go thus unto God, and to appear before his Tribunal? *Jesus* the Son of *Sirach* had well considered this, when he pronounced this excellent Sentence, which I could wish were engraven in the

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Soul of every Chriſtian: *Remember thy latter End, and thou ſhalt not ſin.*

We muſt therefore live in the World without being guilty of its Corruptions and Abominations. As Fiſh preſerves its Sweetneſs in the Midſt of the ſalt Waves of the Sea, and as Sheep never learn to bark nor bite, though Dogs be always with them; likewiſe, though our Converſation be in the World, among the profane and vicious Men of this Age, we muſt not imitate their filthy Words, their Oaths, nor their Blaſphemies; and leſs Reaſon have we to follow their wicked and abominable Deeds; we muſt converſe among them as *Lot* in the City of *Sodom*, as *Joſeph* in *Egypt*, as *Daniel* in *Babylon*. Bleſſed and holy is he who hath Part in the firſt Reſurrection; the ſecond Death ſhall have no Power upon him.

When *Jacob* by God's command went to *Beth-el*, he charged his Wives, his Children, and all that were with him, *Put away the ſtrange Gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your Garments; and let us ariſe and go up to* Beth-el, *Gen.* xxxv. *And I will make there an Altar unto God, who anſwered me in the Day of my Diſtreſs, and was with me in the Way which I went.* Then they delivered into *Jacob's* Hands all the ſtrange Gods that were in their Poſſeſſion, and hid them under an Oak in *Shechem*. Thus, before you go to the true *Bethel*, to the Dwelling where you ſhall eat your Fill of the Bread of the Kingdom of Heaven, before you offer unto God the Sacrifice of your Souls, you muſt, if you be true Chriſtians, renounce Sin, and all wicked Luſts, which have been formerly your Idols. I would adviſe you to bury them deep in this baſe Earth. But you had better do as God commands you from Heaven, *Trample under Foot all theſe abominable Vices, and all theſe worldly Luſts, that are to you as ſo many falſe Gods that you worſhip*, Ezek. ii. *Put away from before me thoſe Idols of Jealouſy, that provoke me to Jealouſy; and ſanctify the Temple of my Holineſs.* Cleanſe your Hands, ye Sinners, and ſanctify yourſelves, ye Double-minded. Put off

the old Man with all his Deeds, and put on the new Man, created according to the Image of God in Righteousness and true Holiness; and then ye shall be admitted to the holy Temple of my Glory, to offer unto me, amongst the innumerable Companies of Saints, the acceptable Perfumes of Praise and Thanksgivings, *James* iv. *Eph.* iv.

This is a Duty so just and necessary, that natural Reason itself, not enlightened by Grace, acknowledges it to be so; nay, the most wretched Varlets are constrained to give Glory to God, and to condemn themselves; they confess that they are indebted to the divine Majesty, but the Payment of this Debt they put off from Day to Day; and whenever you come to them, they are ready to require a Delay; they acknowledge their Faults, the Heinousness of their Crimes, and the Necessity of Repentance; but they are always putting off Repentance and Reformation of Life. As when a Sluggard is newly awaked out of his Sleep, he desires *yet a little Sleep, a little Slumber, a little Folding of the Hands to Sleep*, Prov. xxiv. thus, whenever Death appears, the Voluptuous are yet requesting to enjoy their carnal Delights. When the Lord's Messengers are calling upon us to repair the Breaches that the Devil hath made in our Souls, we could willingly answer, as the *Jews* did to the Prophet, that *the Time is not come that the Lord's House shall be built*, Hag. i. The young Man in his Youth and Strength is apt to say, that it is not yet Time to busy himself about Wisdom and Reformation; and that when he comes to be old, he will then repent of the Sins of his Youth. And the old Man endeavours to put off his Repentance until the Hour of his Departure. He then expects to make a general Confession of all his Crimes, to satisfy all his Neighbours, and to restore what he possesseth unjustly. In short, all Men generally flatter themselves in their evil Courses; and most are so extravagant, as to be persuaded, that when they have lived in Sin and Iniquity all their Life, mis-spent God's Blessing, abused

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his Mercies, a Tear, or a Sigh, at the Time of our Death, will make a ſufficient Amends for all; and that he will be fully ſatisfied, if we ſay then, as the prodigal Child, *My Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven and againſt thee*; or, as the good Thief, *Lord, remember me*, Luke xxiii. 42.

I have much to ſay againſt ſo great a Miſtake, ſo dangerous and profane a Perſuaſion. Firſt, What Reaſon have we to believe, that God will accept our Repentance, when we cannot endure to accept of his Graces and Redemption; that he will hear our Sighs, and grant our Prayers, when we will by no means give Ear to his Voice, nor obey the Commands that he ſends us of repenting?

Wretched Man! doſt thou ſtay to glorify God till the Moment when thy Breath ſhall fail thee? Is it juſt that thou ſhouldſt then begin to ſerve him, when thou ſhalt be able to ſerve and pleaſe thy Fleſh no longer, nor ſatisfy thy fooliſh Luſts?

This great God, who had commanded, during the Shadows and Types of *Moſes's* Law, that the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould offer unto him their Firſt-born, and the Firſt-fruits of their Inheritances, will he take it well now in this admirable Sunſhine of the Goſpel, that thou ſhouldſt offer to the Devil, and to the World, the Firſt-fruits of thy Youth, the Strength of thy Years, and that thou ſhouldſt reſerve for him only the Dregs and Corruption of a decaying old Age?

It is to mock God and Man, to dream of living well, when our Life is far ſpent and gone: To lift up our Eyes and Thoughts to Heaven, when the Earth fails us under our Feet: To reſtore other Men's goods, when we can keep them no longer: To renounce all Deſires of Revenge, when we have no Power of acting: To abſtain from the foul Luſts of the Fleſh, when we are able to continue in them no longer: To abhor Theft, Uſury, Rapine, and Extortion, when a Coffin is preparing to receive us, and Death looks us in the Face. Such Perſons cannot be ſaid to leave Sin, but rather Sin

leaves them, as the Ravens leave the Tree that falls down with Age, or that is struck with the Thunder.

By our unreasonable Delays, Evil and Sin grow older, and the Cure becomes every Day more difficult: For the more thou shalt be hardened in thy Corruption, and confirmed in thy Sins, the harder it will be for thee to break and melt thy corrupted Heart. The deeper Lust shall have cast its Roots in thy Soul, the more Labour thou shalt find in plucking them out. In short, he that gives too much Liberty to his unlawful Affections, makes his Vices, by Custom, become natural, and cannot be converted without a great Miracle.

Man's most important and difficult Affair in the World, is his Conversion to God. Therefore it is a great Folly to put it off to such a Time, as we shall be in the feebleſt and weakeſt Condition; to a Time when we shall have most Business to do, and most Trouble. Doubtless he orders not his Affairs well, who puts off his Praying to God, and his Thoughts of Heaven, until he comes to be stretched on his Death-bed, for then we know not to whom we are first to answer. An Account of our worldly Concerns is then required from us; we are then to make our last Will and Testament; we call for a Scrivener, and are inwardly vexed to behold him; the Visits of Friends trouble us, and their Absence doth much displease us: Pain seizes upon us; Defluxions are ready to choak us; Fevers burn us, and disturb our Minds; Physicians oppress us with noisome Remedies; the Noise is a Trouble to us, and Silence is suspected; our Parents and Friends torment us with their officious Dealings; our Children and our greatest Darlings melt our Hearts, and their Tears force us to weep. But the worst is, the Devils are then most busy and active. These hellish Fiends, like devouring Ravens, fly about us, endeavouring to fright us. In short, it is then the Prince of the Powers of the Air stirs up against us furious Storms and Tempests, to cause us to perish

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in the very Haven. In the Midſt of ſo many Diſturbances, and ſo many powerful Waves, it is a difficult Taſk to poſſeſs our Souls in Peace, to think upon our Conſciences, to hear God ſpeaking to us to prepare for Death as we ought, and to keep ourſelves from ſinking, and from being ſwallowed up with its Apprehenſions and Frights.

Old Age hath Infirmities enough; we need not defile it with youthful Sins and Luſts: For many Times it cauſeth more Wounds in our Souls, than there are Wrinkles upon our Skin. When the Body decays and grows weak, the Luſts of the Fleſh become ſtronger; and oft-times, when it whitens the Face, it ſpots the Conſcience. In a Word, the Bones of old Age are weak enough, and ſufficiently full of Pain, that we need not over-burden them with the Sins committed in the Flower and ſtrength of our Age.

Moreover, we know not when nor how Death will aſſault us, nor what Favour we are to expect from it. Who knows but that it intends not to give us the Liberty of ſpeaking to our Friends, nor of thinking upon our Souls? For it ſends not always a Warning to us, as to the good King *Hezekiah*, *Set thy Houſe in Order, for thou ſhalt die*, 2 Kings xx. For as we have already taken Notice, it ſurprizeth us in every Age, in every Time and Place, and in the Midſt of all manner of Employments. Old *Eli* fell down backward, and brake his Neck, when he heard the unhappy News of the taking of the Ark, and the Death of his Sons. *Job's* Children dreamed of nothing but of ſolacing and delighting themſelves in their Feaſts and Jollity, when the Houſe where they were fell down, and buried them in its Ruins. But beſides theſe unhappy Accidents, how many are there, whoſe Mouth Death cloſed on a ſudden, without ſuffering them to ſpeak a Word! How many are there in the World, who are thought to be in perfect Health, and yet ſuddenly fall into an Apoplexy, and into other quick Diſeaſes, ſo that they are to be found ſooner dead than thought to be ſick!

Beſides,

Beſides, though we ſhould have a greater Strength and Vigour, ſo that we might foreſee the Time of our Departure drawing near, Repentance is not at our Command; it is given us from above, and a ſpecial Favour of the Holy Spirit. God works not Miracles every Day; he changeth not at every Moment Rocks into Springs of Water, nor Stones into Rivers of Oil; he grants not the Favour to all Sinners, hardened in their Luſts, and confirmed in their Apoſtaſy from him, to be converted, and to be waſhed with the Tears of Repentance.

If thou ſeeſt a Thief repenting at the Time of his Suffering, it is a particular Example that aboliſhes not the general Rule. By this Man God intends to comfort Sinners who truly repent at the End of their Days, and to aſſure them, that the Arms of his Mercy are always open to receive them into his Favour. I confeſs, that true Repentance can never be too late; but I affirm, that it can never be too ſoon. It is moſt certain, that at any Time the Sinner repents, God will ſhew him Mercy; but that Moment is not in our Power. For one Sinner that repents at the Hour of Death, there are Thouſands that depart in Impenitency. And to ſet no other Example but that which Mount *Calvary* offers to us; if thou ſeeſt on one Side of *Chriſt* a Thief converted and believing, look on the other Side, and thou ſhalt perceive a Wretch, who having ſpent his Days in Wickedneſs and Impiety, expires in his Sins, belching forth grievous Blaſphemies and Reproaches againſt the King of Glory: So that, if one of theſe remarkable Paſſages flatters thee, and lulls thy Conſcience aſleep, the other ſhould move and awaken thee with an holy Fear. Moreover, the Thief was converted at the firſt Moment, and *Chriſt* called and invited him. Therefore, now that you hear the Voice of God calling, harden not your Hearts as in the Day of Provocation, for Fear that God ſhould ſwear in his Anger that you ſhall never enter into his Reſt. Now, at this very Inſtant that you read this, turn unto God

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with all your Heart, and he will have Pity and Compaſſion upon you.

When the Opportunity is once loſt, it is not eaſily and at all Times recovered; therefore Painters have repreſented *Occaſion* with a great Tuft of Hair on the Forehead, and all bald behind; but unto every Thing there is a Seaſon. God hath vouchſafed unto us a Time, and reſerved another for himſelf. Our Time is when we are invited to Repentance; but God's Time is when he manifeſts and declares his Juſtice and Judgments. During the ſpace of one hundred and twenty Years, *Noah*, an Herald of Righteouſneſs, preached Repentance to the old World; this was their Time; but when God's abuſed Patience was juſtly provoked; it turned into Fury. Then he ſent a fearful Deluge, that covered all the Face of the Earth; this was God's Time, and the Day of his juſt Vengeance. When *Lot* ſpake to his Sons-in-law to perſuade them to go out of *Sodom*, this was the Time of their Salvation and Deliverance; but when Fire and Brimſtone overwhelmed and burned them alive, their Crimes and Gnaſhing of Teeth were as uſeleſs as their Laughter and Mocking had been formerly unjuſt. When *Eſau* ſold the Privilege of his Birth-right, it was the Time of thinking ſeriouſly upon the true and heavenly Bleſſing; but when he had ſold it for a Sup of Pottage, all his Tears and Weepings were as fruitleſs, as his Gluttony had been inſatiable, and his Temper profane. When the Bridegroom in the *Canticles* was at the Door with the Dew of his heavenly Joys, and Myrrh of his eternal Comforts, it was the Bride's Time, and the Occaſion that was offered to her to enjoy the heavenly Delight; but when ſhe had delayed a while, unwilling to riſe from her Bed, and put on her Coat, he was gone, and it was to no Purpoſe that ſhe ſought him about the City; for inſtead of meeting with the Embraces of her Beloved, ſhe finds her Enemies that beat and wounded her. When the poor *Lazarus* begged his Bread at the rich Man's Gate, it was the Time when this unmerciful Man ſhould have

have repented; and ſhewed Mercy to the Poor; but when in Hell, burning in the Flames, it was in vain, that he lifted up his Eyes to Heaven to ſeek for ſome Comfort. When our Saviour exhorteth the *Jews* to believe in him; when he wept ſo bitterly over *Jeruſalem*, that had killed the Prophets; it was the Time and Opportunity of this unhappy Nation, it was the Time of their Salvation, and of God's Bleſſings; but when they had obſtinately rejected this great God and Saviour, and deſired that his Blood might be upon them and their Children, God caſt them away from him, and they are become a Scorn and a Reproach amongſt all the Nations of the Earth. Finally, as it is to no Purpoſe that a Malefactor reſolves to amend his Life, when the Judge is at the Door, and when the Serjeants have caught him by the Throat, or when he is upon the Gallows, ready to be ſtrangled and executed; likewiſe it is too late to begin to think upon God, when Death ſeizes upon us, and Hell opens its Jaws to ſwallow us. Miſerable Wretch! why deſpiſeſt thou the Riches of God's Goodneſs and Patience, and of his Long-ſuffering, not conſidering, that the Goodneſs of God invites thee to Repentance? But by the Hardneſs of thine Heart, that is without Repentance, thou treaſureſt *up unto thyſelf Wrath againſt the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, who ſhall render to every Man according to his Works*, Rom. ii.

Certainly our Salvation is a Matter too important to be neglected, our Life too uncertain to delay it till the next Day, and our Soul too precious to run the Hazard of loſing it. If we had many, we might venture the Loſs of one; but ſeeing that we have but one only, and that, if it be loſt, all the Riches and Treaſures of the World cannot redeem it, we ſhould be moved with an holy Fear of ſo great a Loſs, and decline whatſoever might caſt this our precious Soul into the ſecond Death and eternal Damnation.

It is our Lord and Saviour's Exhortation, *Watch*, ſaith he, *for ye know not the Hour when the Lord is to come. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation; for the Spirit is willing, but the Fleſh is weak*, Matt. xiv. Mark x. Luke xxii. This Advice was ſo neceſſary, that he doth often repeat it; *Take heed to yourſelves, watch and pray, for ye know not when the Time ſhall be. Take heed to yourſelves, leſt your Hearts be overcharged with Gluttony and Drunkenneſs, and the Cares of this Life, and that Day ſurpriſe you unawares; for as a Thief it ſhall come on all them that dwell on the Face of the whole Earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye be accounted worthy to eſcape all theſe Things that ſhall come to paſs, and to ſtand before the Son of Man*, Matt. xiii. Luke xxi.

To awaken us to move from our ſpiritual Drowſineſs and profane Sleep, our Saviour brings this Example of the Wicked Servant, who ſaid in his Heart, *My Lord delayeth his Coming*, Matt. xxiv. And therefore he began to beat his Fellow-ſervants, to eat, drink, and be drunk. Our Saviour adds, that the Lord of that Servant ſhall come in a Day when he looketh not for him, and in an Hour when he is not expected; and ſhall cut him aſunder, and appoint him his Portion with the Hypocrites; there ſhall be Weeping and Gnaſhing of Teeth, *Matt.* xxiv. The Parable of the fooliſh Virgins had the ſame Drift: They being fallen aſleep without any Oil in their Lamps, were ſo ſurprized at the Bridegroom's Coming, that they could not be admitted into the Marriage-chamber; it was in vain that they beat at the Gate, with a *Lord, Lord, open unto us*, Matt. xxv. The Door could not be opened to them; but it was anſwered from within, *Verily, I ſay unto you, I know you not.*

It is certain, the chief and principal Purpoſe of this and other Parables is, to teach us how we ſhould be prepared to expect the glorious Coming of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*; but they may very well be applied to Death; for it hath pleaſed God to keep ſecret and hidden

hidden the Day in which he will call us to himſelf, and that of our Saviour's coming to Judgment, that we may be equally prepared, and diſpoſed, for the one as well as for the other. As we ſhall be found at the Time of our Death, ſo ſhall we be judged at the great Day, when *Chriſt* ſhall come down from Heaven with the Angels of his Power; and from that Judgment there ſhall be no Appeal. Let us therefore put off the Sin that doth ſo eaſily beſet us, and break all the Chains of our filthy Luſts. Let us diſarm Death, and take from it its venomous Darts, and its piercing Stings. Let us pluck off the Claws and the Teeth of this furious Beaſt, and extinguiſh all its Fires, and it ſhall never be able to terrify us. Let us live the Life of Saints, and God will give us Grace to die the Death of the Righteous, and to end like them. Let us live as we would at the Inſtant when Death is upon our Lips. Let us live as if at every Moment we were to die, and as if God were calling to us, *Come and appear to Judgement.*

And when *Satan*, the World, and our own Fleſh, ſolicit and draw us to Evil, let us ſay within ourſelves, Is it thus that thou wilt reward the Lord thy God, and acknowledge all the Beſſings and Favours that thou haſt received from his bountiful Hands? O Fool, doſt thou conceive that thou canſt go to Heaven by marching the Road to Hell? If thou doſt wilfully caſt thyſelf away into the Depths of Sin, what Aſſurance haſt thou of riſing again by Repentance? If thou forſakeſt God, art thou not afraid God will forſake thee? Is it thus thou prepareſt thyſelf to die? Are theſe Luſts the Arms with which thou muſt encounter Death? Art thou ready to draw near to the ſacred Majeſty of thy God, and to appear before his great Tribunal? The Night is far ſpent, the Day is at Hand: Let us therefore caſt off the Works of Darkneſs, and let us put on the Armour of Light, *Rom.* x. Let us live as Children of God, and Heirs of his Kingdom, *Phil.* iii. Let us be blameleſs and ſhine as Lights in the World. Let our Converſation be as Citizens in Heaven,

from

from whence we expect the Lord *Jeſus*, Eph. ii. Let us go to the heavenly and holy *Jeruſalem*, by the Way of good Works, which God hath prepared, that we might walk in them, *Zech.* xiii. In all our Actions, Words, and Thoughts, let there be engraven *Holineſs to the Lord.* Let us diſcover by our Deeds, that we really believe, without doubting, whatſoever the holy Scripture declares of the eternal Pains of Hell, and of the unſpeakable Joys of Heaven, *Gal.* vi. Whilſt we have Time, let us do Good to all, but chiefly to the Houſhold of Faith, *Eph.* v. Let us redeem the Time, for the Days are evil. Follow not *Adam's* Example, who, to eat of the Fruit ſo pleaſing to his Taſte, loſt the Paradiſe which God had given him. Let us not loſe the eternal Delights that God hath prepared for us from the Beginning of the World, for a Moment of carnal Pleaſure.

Let us imitate the holy and wiſe Virgins, put Oil in our Lamps betimes; let us enrich our Hearts with Faith, Hope, and Charity, and put on the Robes of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs. As God's faithful Servants, let us labour to accompliſh our Taſk. Let us be ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, that when Death ſhall appear, or rather when the Prince of Life ſhall call us to himſelf, we may be ready to give him an exact Account of our Talents, with which he hath entruſted us, that we may ſay unto him in Sincerity and Truth, *I have done the Work that thou haſt given me, I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith.* O moſt excellent Lord I have nothing elſe to do, but to receive from thine Hand the Crown of Righteouſneſs which thou haſt promiſed to all that love thine Appearance; I have nothing elſe to do but to enter into thy glorious Reſt, where thou doſt embrace in thine infinite Mercies all ſuch as overcome Sin and Death, and keep thy Word unto the End.

A Prayer and Meditation for one who prepares for Death, by Repentance and an holy Life.

SINCE Sin hath brought Death into the World, and rendered this Enemy so terrible to us; enable me, with thy divine Virtue, to disarm it of all its fiery Darts and mortal Poison. In regard thou hast prepared for me thine heavenly Kingdom from the Creation of the World, grant me Grace to employ the Residue of this Life in purging my Conscience from dead Works, in studying the great Business of Sanctification, that I may be in Readiness to enter into that Abode of Holiness, into which no impure Thing can be admitted. O heavenly Father, discover to my Soul, by the Light of thine holy Spirit, the Foolishness and Deformity of Sin, and its dreadful Consequences; that I may abhor it as an universal Monster, Satan's Image, and a grievous Pollution, that hath defaced in our Souls the blessed Features of thyself. Let me look upon it as a cursed Burning, that hath kindled thy Wrath, and will at last set on Fire and consume this Frame of the World. Let me look upon it as an intolerable Burden, under which Nature itself groans; and Heaven complains of it as a publick Murderer of our first Parents, of all Mankind, and of the Lord of Life. O that I may treat it as mine Enemy that hath provoked thy Vengeance, and strives yet to cast me into eternal Torments: Make me sensible of the Beauty of Holiness, and the Glory that shall crown it; that mine Affections may embrace it as an invaluable Jewel, taken from me by Satan, as an Image and Beam of thy Perfections, and as that which shall make a principal Part of our Happiness in thy Kingdom. O God of my Salvation, thou seest my Grief and inward Trouble, to have so long assisted this Tyrant Sin, to destroy my Soul, and to have neglected my chief Business in the World, to serve and glorify thee. What shall I pretend as an Excuse for myself? O my Sovereign Lord, I have sinned against thee, and committed abominable Acts. But I repent in Dust and Ashes, and cannot but look back upon my evil Deeds with Horror. O God, who searchest the Heart, thou knowest that my greatest Grief proceeds from my not grieving sufficiently, and as mine

Iniquities have deſerved. The Number and Greatneſs of my Crimes are not hid from thee; and thou underſtandeſt what I ought to do, and to be, to obtain Pardon. O Lord, I ſeek not the Motive of it in myſelf, but in thine infinite Mercy, that deſireſt not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he ſhould turn and live. Turn me, O God, and grant me the Grace of Repentance. Thou art able to change this ſtony Heart, and cauſe it to yield penitent Tears; but rather give me, inſtead of this hard Heart, another faſhioned after thine own Image; an Heart that may be inflamed with Love and Zeal for thee. O my Redeemer, thou haſt completed the Work of my Salvation, by ſpilling thy own Blood to atone for us. Continue that good Work in us. Sanctify my Soul and Body, and make me a new Creature. Mortify this wicked Fleſh, with all its Luſts, that the Life I ſhall lead may be in Imitation of the holy Jeſus. Take Poſſeſſion of me by the Direction and Government of thy bleſſed Spirit, that I may deteſt and ſhun all Appearances of Evil, and the Garments defiled with Sin. O let the Thoughts of Death, thy holy Fear, the Miſery of departing Sinners, and the Happineſs of ſuch as die in thy Favour, be entertained continually in my Mind, that I may renounce all Impiety and worldly Luſts, and finiſh my latter Courſe in Sobriety, Juſtice, and religious Duties. But chiefly, let Charity influence my Affections and Actions; for ſuch Sacrifices are acceptable to thee. O merciful God, the great Buſineſs of Life is not quickly finiſhed; my Days are but ſhort, and I know not how ſoon thou wilt take me away. Aſſiſt me therefore in the Performance of what thou requireſt from me, and accompliſh in me thy good Work, that at thy coming I may not be ſurprized or troubled, being diligently employed in thy Service. O my gracious and heavenly Father, vouchſafe unto me all thoſe divine Qualifications needful to diſpoſe me for thy eternal Communion, and for the Society of thy bleſſed Saints, that are gone before me; that, at my Departure, my Saviour may receive and welcome my Soul, with a Come, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord. *Amen.*

CHAP. XII.

The ſixth Remedy againſt the Fears of Death is, to repoſe ourſelves upon God's good Providence.

SOME Perſons there are ſo brutiſh and ſtupid, that they never think upon the great End and Deſign of their Creation, and are not able to give a juſt Account wherefore God hath put them into the World; carnal and earthly Minds who imagine that they were created for themſelves, as brute Beaſts, only to eat and drink. Such are mentioned by St. *Paul*, their God is their Belly, and their End is eternal Miſery. But there are alſo ſome wiſe and virtuous Souls that are continually meditating upon the Favours they receive from Heaven, which they employ to their right and proper Uſe. Such celeſtial Underſtandings, being enlightened from above, conſider very well, that they are not born for themſelves, but for their Country, for their Parents, for their Friends, and chiefly to ſerve God and his Church on Earth. Therefore they deſire to live only to glorify their Creator, and advance his Kingdom.

When this good Deſire is well governed, it is acceptable to God, as a ſweet-ſmelling Sacrifice. This was *David's* earneſt Deſire, in *Pſal.* cxix. *Let my Soul live, that I may praiſe thee.* This holy Zeal, forced ſo many bitter Tears from King *Hezekiah* in his Sickneſs, and cauſed him to entreat moſt earneſtly to live yet longer in the World. This wiſe and religious Prince well foreſaw the fearful Evils, the grievous Confuſion, and the abominable Idolatry that was likely to ſucceed after his Death, in the Kingdom of *Judah*. He was therefore very deſirous to glorify God on Earth, and to accompliſh the Reformation which he had begun. He deſired to have Children whom he might teach to fear God with all their Hearts, and to ſerve him according to his holy and divine Will,

Will, that that he might cauſe Piety to continue in his Houſe and Royal Family. He diſcovers this holy Deſire in his divine Hymn, which he ſung unto God after his miraculous Recovery: *Behold, for Peace I had great Bitterneſs, but thou haſt in love to my Soul delivered it from the Pit of Deſtruction; for thou haſt caſt all my Sins behind thy Back; for the Grave cannot praiſe,* Iſa. xxxviii. *Death cannot celebrate thee, they that go down to the Pit cannot hope for thy Truth; the Living he ſhall praiſe thee, as I do this Day; the Father to the Children ſhall make known thy Truth. The Lord was ready to ſave me, therefore will I ſing my Songs to the ſtringed Inſtruments all the Days of my Life in the Houſe of the Lord.* We find the ſame earneſt Deſire in St. *Paul*; for when he looks upon himſelf, and upon the Miſeries that attend him on Earth, he lifts up his Eyes to ſee the heavenly Bliſs that waited for him above; he deſires to depart out of this earthly Tabernacle, and to be with *Chriſt*; and acknowledgeth that it would be his great Advantage. But when he looks upon the Church of *Chriſt*, his Deſire of the Salvation and Inſtruction of his Brethren cauſeth him to prefer their Comfort to his own Happineſs and Joy. *It is,* ſaith he, *more expedient for you that I remain in the Fleſh; and I know for certain that I ſhall abide and remain with you for your Advantage, and the Joy of your Faith.*

This Deſire of Life, with an Intent of glorifying God is good and holy. But it is no eaſy Taſk to keep it within its juſt and lawful Bounds; for very often it becomes vicious, when it is ſtirred up by a fond Love of our own Perſons, which makes us loth to die.

For Example: When a great Prince, animated with an heroical Virtue, is engaged in a War for the Preſervation of his Subjects, and for the Delivery of many afflicted People from Oppreſſion and Tyranny; if God bleſſeth his arms, and cauſeth his glorious Deſigns to ſucceed, he will not be pleaſed, if Death at that Inſtant offer to croſs him, to break in Pieces his

victorious Arm, to put an End to his Conqueſts and to caſt his Crown to the Ground. He may juſtly complain in this Manner: Muſt I now leave off ſuch a notable and brave Deſign? Muſt I here ſtop in the Midſt of ſuch a glorious Race? Muſt Death bury, with my Body, the Expectations of ſo many good Men? I am afraid that all my Labours will vaniſh away with my Breath. I have juſt Cauſe to fear that my Fall will draw after me the Deſtruction of many poor People that depend upon me. I fear, that Oppreſſion and Tyranny will reſume freſh Spirits and a greater Boldneſs, and prove, for the future, more grievous and inſufferable. O cruel and inhuman Death! by taking away my Life, thou bringeſt my Friends to Execution, and the Arrows that thou ſtickeſt in my Heart, pierce the Souls of many innocent People.

Likewiſe he that is promoted to be the King's Vicegerent in a Province, or to be a Governor of a rich Country, an important Place, may be grieved, becauſe Death ſnatched him away in the Midſt of all his Buſineſs, eſpecially if it be in troubleſome Times, and if he ſees none of a ſufficient Ability to ſucceed him. Muſt I, will ſuch an one ſay, muſt I quit ſo ſoon this glorious Employment? Muſt I ſo quickly leave my princely Service, and forſake ſo many poor People, as a Flock without a Shepherd? Death! how hateful and odious art thou! Thou delighteſt to bring all Things into Confuſion and Trouble.

Thus a brave General of a victorious Army, who being full of Courage manageth a ſucceſsful War for the Honour of his Prince, and the Advantage of his Country, cannot but complain againſt Death, when he comes to ſubdue him, before he hath totally ſubdued and overcome his Enemies; eſpecially if the Times be ſo unhappy, that none is able to ſucceed him in that Employment, he will be ready to break forth into Complaints: Muſt I leave off ſo many glorious Deſigns? Muſt I forſake my moſt faithful Soldiers, and abandon them to the Mercy of their Enemies,

mies, or to the capricious Humour of an unexperienced Succeſſor? O Death, full of Envy! wilt thou pluck out of my Hands ſo ſoon this conquering Sword, and cut off with one Blow of thy Scythe ſo many great Expectations? In the ſame manner he that ſits in the moſt honourable Seat of Judicature, as a Judge, a Preſident or a Counſellor, or any other chief Magiſtrate, will doubtleſs mourn if Death ſeizeth upon him in the Flower of his Age; eſpecially if he fears that after him corrupt Men will ſucceed, who may be likened to whitened Walls. Muſt I, will he ſay, leave ſo ſoon this noble Office, in which I took ſo much Delight? O inconſiderate Death! why doſt thou not ſuffer me to wear my Purple, until ſuch Time as I ſhall be weary to bear it? Why doſt thou not permit me to ſit here upon this magnificent Seat, until I tumble off with old Age.

Likewiſe a faithful Miniſter of the Goſpel, when he perceives the Work of the Lord to proſper in his Hands, Satan falling from Heaven by his Means, as Lightening, and *Dagon* brought upon his Face to the Ground, may juſtly wonder at Death's Approaches, and ſpeak after this manner: Muſt I ſoon quit the Duties of this holy Function, in which I took my greateſt Delight? Muſt I break off from this ſacred Work by which I advanced ſo happily the Glory of God? I am afraid, when I am gone, ravening Wolves will enter into the Lord's Flock, and a terrible Night of Ignorance will overſhadow our Poſterity.

Thus a Father of a Family, who paſſionately loves his Wife and his Children, ſhall never ſee Death, but ſhall feel all his Bowels move, and his Heart tormented with Grief. He will ſigh out ſuch Expreſſions as theſe: Muſt I forſake a poor forlorn Wife, ſwimming in Tears? Muſt I leave my tender-hearted Parents, who found my Life a Comfort, and will find my Death an Affliction? Muſt I abandon my dear Children, whom I love as my Soul, without a Guide, and in Danger of loſing the ſmall temporal Means

that I have provided for them; in Danger also of being overcome by the vicious Customs of the Age, and enticed to Idolatry and Superstition?

That we may be able to govern this violent Passion, that prevails so much upon our Minds, we must labour betimes to bring ourselves to this: *To rest upon the good Providence of our heavenly Father.* Christian Souls meditate upon this excellent Saying in *Psal.* xxxvii. *Leave thy Ways to the Lord, and trust in him, and he will direct thee.* And in *Psal.* lv. *Cast thy Burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee.* Forget not also that blessed Exhortation of St. *Peter*, *Cast all your Care upon God, for he careth for you.* Imprint also in your Mind St. *Paul's* Assertion, *All Things work together for Good to them that love God.* Remember the noble Resolution of that great Apostle: *According to my earnest Expectation and my Hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all Boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my Body, whether it be by Life or by Death,*

Thou desirest to be instrumental in the Service of God, and of the Public. It is an excellent Desire indeed, and Praise-worthy; but it belongs to God to appoint the Service that he intends to receive from thee. It belongs to him to prescribe to thee thy Task, and to order thy Bounds. He knows when he is to release thee from thy Labour, and how long thou must fight. Is thine Eye evil, because thy God is so good and gracious to shorten thy Work and Troubles? All such as follow chearfully the Banners of the Lord of Hosts, and never retreat without the Command of the great General of Heaven and Earth, shall enjoy a blessed Victory, and obtain the Honour of the Triumph; as well the Novice and the fresh Soldier, as the old and long experienced. All such as labour faithfully in the Lord's Vineyard shall receive from him an eternal Reward, as well as he that continues but an Hour, as the other that bears the Heat and Burden of the Day. When thou shouldst have gone but a few

few ſteps in the Paths of Righteouſneſs, thy God is ſo noble and liberal, that he will beſtow upon thee an incorruptible Crown of Glory, as well as if thou hadſt continued there many Years.

Great Princes, who yield to the King of Kings a religious Reſpect, that ſeek your greateſt Glory in the Croſs of *Chriſt*, ſubmit yourſelves altogether to the Pleaſure of your univerſal Monarch: For ſeeing the Lives of all Men are governed by his wiſe Providence he hath a particular Regard, and an high Eſteem of the Lives of Kings and Princes, the Sons of his Right-Hand. Therefore, whilſt it is expedient for his Glory, and their Salvation, that they ſhould live upon Earth, he placeth round about their ſacred Perſons his holy Angels, and encompaſſeth them with a Wall of Fire. Remember, that as ſoon as the King of *Iſrael* was ſeated upon the Throne, God commanded him to take in Hand the Book of his Law, and to read in it all the Days of his Life. Aſk from him that Wiſdom and Prudence that is requiſite to govern ſuch Multitudes of People, and beſeech him to grant unto you the Strength and Virtue that is neceſſary to bear ſo great a Burden. Let the Sword that he hath entruſted in your Hands, be to do Juſtice upon Offenders, and to protect the Guiltleſs. As you are living Images of God's ſovereign Authority over his Creatures, remember that you ſhould alſo imitate his Goodneſs and Mercy. Follow the Example of him who reſiſts the Proud, but gives Grace to the Humble. Live in ſuch a Manner, that your Subjects, may cheriſh and honour you as their common Father, may obey and ſerve you as their Lord, and may reſpect and fear you as their King. Suffer not your Heart to be puffed up with Pride, when you behold the large Dominions that God hath put under your Command, and the people that own you for their Sovereign: But lift up your Eyes to the ſpacious Heavens, take a View of their vaſt Extent, and ſee how the whole Earth is inconſiderable in Compa-

riſon of them; and think upon God, before whom all Nations are but as the ſmalleſt Duſt of a Balance, and as a few Drops of Water. Conſider well that your Subjects are Creatures that God hath made after his own Likeneſs, and redeemed by the Death of his Son, and that they are to reign with you for ever in Heaven. Remember, that the more God has committed to your Truſt, the greater muſt be your reckoning, and that you muſt one Day appear in Perſon before his dreadful Throne, without Sceptre or Crown, or as other wretched Sinners, to implore his Mercy. Search into yourſelves, and examine what you are; your Bodies are ſubject to Wounds, Infirmities, and Diſeaſes, as that of the meaneſt of your Servants; your Souls are alſo moved with the ſame Paſſions and Luſts as theirs. In ſhort, you are entered into the World in the ſame manner as the moſt miſerable Slave, and you ſhall go out of it again as he doth. So that if a Croud of Flatterers ſooth you up, as they did *Herod, the Voice of a God, and not of a Man,* Acts xii. mind well what God ſpeaks to you from Heaven, *I have ſaid that ye are Gods and the Children of the moſt High; nevertheleſs you ſhall die as Men, and you that are the chiefeſt, ſhall fall as the reſt,* Pſal. lxxii. During the Time of your Abode in the World, employ your Blood, Sweat, and all the Strength and Power that God hath put into your Hands, for the Good and Advantage of your Empire, and for the Defence and Preſervation of your People, that are under your Protection. And if, in the Midſt of your greateſt and moſt flouriſhing Proſperities, Death comes to give you a ſummons to depart, let fall the Sceptre willingly, to join your Hands together, and fall down and adore the King of the whole Earth. Grieve not for the Loſs of worldly Glory, that paſſeth away as Lightening, or as a Shadow; for God promiſeth another, that ſhall be more laſting than the Light of the Sun. If you can but overcome Death and yourſelves, God will cauſe you to ſit down upon another Throne, and will beſtow upon you a Kingdom that will never be moved, *Rev.* iii. *Heb.* xiii.

Wiſe

Wiſe and religious Princes, be not ſolicitous for the Things that ſhall happen after your Deceaſe. He by whom Kings reign, and Princes do Juſtice, is able enough to enrich your Succeſſor with the Graces and Qualities that become a powerful Prince. It may be that he will beſtow upon him more Glory and Happineſs than upon you. When King *David* had ended his mortal Race, God took him into his Reſt. It ſeemed at firſt, that the Loſs of ſo good a Prince could not be repaired; but God cauſed *Solomon* to ſit upon his Father's throne, and made him the wiſeſt and the moſt happy Monarch in the World. *David* did but remove God's Ark, but *Solomon* built for him a ſtately and magnificent Temple. *David* was a Type of the Encounters and Victories of the Son of God, but *Solomon* repreſented his glorious Triumphs, and that eternal Peace with which he ſhall bleſs his Choſen in the Kingdom of Heaven.

What if you leave your Children under Age? Be not diſcouraged, for God will preſerve them, as the Signet upon his Right-Hand, or as the Apple of his Eye. Think upon *Joſias*, who was but eight Years old when he ſucceeded in the Kingdom of *Judæa*; nevertheleſs there was never a Prince more holy and more religious; none ever did more Good to the Church of God. And that you may be able to ſtrengthen your Faith, and confirm your glorious Expectations, meditate upon the Life of *Joaſh*, who was but one Year old when his Father was killed, and an infernal Fury ſought to deſtroy him; but in the Middle of ſo many Tragedies God preſerved him alive by a Miracle, and placed him in a glorious Manner upon the Throne of his Fathers. Seeing therefore that it is the Pleaſure of him who gives and takes away the earthly Crowns, leave chearfully this corruptible one, to receive another that is immortal and incorruptible. You alſo, noble Governors of Countries and Caſtles, that repreſent the Perſons of your Kings and Princes, remember that this Dignity comes not only from the Appointment of your

your Masters, but from God himself, who holds in his Hands the Hearts of all the Kings and Princes of the World. Remember what our Saviour told the Governor of *Judæa*, *Thou couldst have no Power upon me, if it were not given to thee from above*, John xix. Let all the World see by you, that there is nothing more agreeable, with Piety towards God, than Fidelity and Loyalty to your Prince. Take heed that you abuse not your Power and Authority in satisfying your Passions, and pleasing your Covetousness or Vanity. Protect not the Guilty, and oppress not the Innocent. Seeing that you are appointed to punish evil Doers, and to encourage such as do well, behave yourselves as if you were always in the Sight of your Prince, or rather behave yourselves as in the Presence and in the Sight of God, before whom all Things are naked and open, and as if you were to give up unto him an Account of your Stewardship. Whilst you are happily employed in the Service of your Prince, and of your Country, if Death comes to interrupt your Prosperity, yield yourselves, without Resistance, to the wise Orders of him who is both your Sovereign Lord, and theirs, to whom you must be subject on Earth.

Trouble not yourselves with the Thoughts of the Things that shall happen after your Death, and think not but that there are yet some worthy and able to succeed you in your Employments. When God is pleased to be favourable to Kings, and to cause their Empire to flourish, he raiseth up faithful Ministers, and wise Governors; as when he gave to *Pharaoh a Joseph*, to *Hezekiah* an *Eliakim*, to *Nebuchadnezzar* a *Daniel*. When he pleaseth to search into his unfathomed Treasures, he can quickly provide Men after his own Heart, adorned with all the Abilities required for a worthy Discharge of a glorious Employment. In the mean while, if thou hast overcome *Satan*, Sin, the World and Death, thou shalt go and take Possession of a greater and more lasting Glory. He that bears upon his Garments and Thighs this Inscription, *The King of Kings, and the Lord*

of

of Lords, hath given out this unchangeable Promiſe, *He that ſhall overcome, and hath kept my Words until the End, I will give unto him the Power over the Nations, and he ſhall govern them with a Rod of Iron.*

Right honourable Counſellors, that aſſiſt your Prince with your ſage Advices, and you inferior Magiſtrates and Judges, never forget what *Jehoſaphat* ſaid to the Judges of his Kingdom, 2 *Chron.* xix. *Take heed what ye do, for ye judge not for Man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the Judgement: Wherefore, now let the Fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it; for there is no Iniquity with the Lord our God, nor Reſpect of Perſons, nor taking of Gifts*, Pſal. lxxv. Whenſoever ye go to take your Place amongſt the Judges of the Kingdom, remember that God ſits there upon his Throne; and every Time that you give a Charge, or pronounce a Sentence, conſider that you are to follow God's Directions and that this great Creator takes Notice of your Actions, Words, and of the Motions of your Heart, and that he underſtands your moſt ſecret Thoughts. Judge with the ſame Equity and Juſtice with which ye deſire to be judged. If you be tempted to overthrow Right, to conceal Truth, or to commit any Injuſtice, either by a baſe Compliance, by an Expectation of worldly Advantage, or for filthy Lucre, remember that it is the Devil that tempts you; pray therefore to God, to deliver you from his Power. And that you may be better able to command yourſelves with an holy Awe, mind that Death ſummons you to appear in Perſon, nay, drags you before the univerſal Judge of Mankind, to give up an Account of all your Actions, and of the Sentences you have given. But if Death ſurprizeth you when you are diſcharging your Office with all the Diligence and Integrity imaginable, ſtay not till it forces you, but caſt off willingly the Robes of Judicature, to take the Habit of a Supplicant, and pray to God that he may not enter into Judgement with you, becauſe no living Creature ſhall be juſtified in his Sight, *Pſal.* cxliii.

Let

Let not the Thoughts of what ſhall happen after your Deceaſe, obſtruct your Chriſtian Reſolution. There are Men enough in the World of a ſufficient Ability to ſupply your Places; and God is able to raiſe up ſome that we dream not of, as when he created in one Day threeſcore and ten Judges in *Iſrael*, whom he endowed with ſufficient Abilities, and with the Graces of his holy Spirit. He may produce ſome that will be as righteous and juſt as yourſelves, and it may be, more enlightened with Diſcretion and Prudence than you. Come off therefore willingly from theſe Seats of Judicature, ſo beſet with Thorns, upon which you ſhould never reſt without Horror and Dread, if you ſincerely fear God; and go with Confidence to the Throne of Grace, that you may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in Time of Need, *Heb.* iv.

And as there may be as much Regard to Religion in the Tents of *David*, as in the Temple of *Solomon*; and that the Sword of *Gideon* agrees well with that of the Lord of Hoſts; I may make my Addreſs to you, worthy Generals, brave Captains, and generous Nobility, unto whom Kings, Princes, and Commonwealths commit the Leading of their Armies. I ſpeak not to you, profane Atheiſts, who laugh at the ſacred Myſteries, and are of Opinion, that all Fear of God muſt be baniſhed out of your Troops and Companies, and that the moſt wretched Varlets are the beſt Soldiers; but I ſpeak to you, chriſtian and religious Commanders, who forget not, by your Promotion amongſt Men, that you are nevertheleſs the Soldiers of *Jeſus Chriſt:* and though you wear at your Side a material Sword, forget not to employ alſo the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God that dwells in your Hearts. Neither do I intend to ſpeak to you that manage War with an Intent only to ſatisfy your Revenge, your Ambition, or your Covetouſneſs; but I ſpeak to you, brave and worthy Captains, who have purified your Weapons in an heavenly Fire, who undertake War only to procure a more laſting Peace to the Public,

and

and fight only to ſerve your Prince and Country; you that are the great Bulwarks of States and Empires, by whoſe Labours and Vigilancy Men ſleep in Security. Let the whole World ſee by Experience in your Perſons that there is nothing that agrees better with true Generoſity, than Piety and the Fear of God. Behave yourſelves always as in the ſight of your Maker, who is always preſent and accompanies you in all your Actions. Remember that he hath commanded to remove all Filth from the Camp of *Iſrael*, becauſe of his holy and divine Preſence. If you will obtain his Bleſſing upon your Perſons and Deſigns, caſt out of your Armies the Filth of Vice, and puniſh, without Mercy, Rapes, Burnings, Impiety, and Blaſphemies. Cauſe your Soldiers to put in Practice St. *John the Baptiſt's* moſt excellent Advice to the Military Men of his Time, who enquired what they were to do to be ſaved; *Do Violence*, ſaid he, *to no Man, neither accuſe any falſly, and be content with your Wages.* Live as Lambs and fight as Lions. Spare as much as you can the Blood of your Soldiers, and ſhed not that of your Enemies, but againſt your Wills; for they are God's Creatures and bear his Image. Never truſt to your own Valour and Experience, but remember that it is God that gives courage and ſtrengthens your Hands in the Day of Battle, who cauſeth Fear and Terror to fly where he liſteth. Look always upon *David's* Example; there was never a captain more courageous, nor more willing to venture his Life; and yet there was never a Perſon more zealous in Prayer to God, nor more ſubmiſſive to his Will, nor more careful to return unto him the Praiſes of all his Advantages. And if Death comes to put a ſtop to your Victories, or to call you away in a Time when your Prudence and courage are requiſite, wonder not at it, conſider that God offers you by this Means an Occaſion of a more glorious Victory, and a more magnificent Triumph: For the Victory over Thouſands of mortal Men, and the whole World, is nothing in Compariſon of the Victory over Death and Hell. Inquire

not

not who ſhall ſucceed you in the Conduct of your Army, out of a Diſtruſt of God's Providence: For he who is able to raiſe up Children unto *Abraham* out of Stones, can raiſe up alſo from thence Captains and Soldiers. When he pleaſeth to give a Check to the Enemies Pride, and to deliver his People from their Tyranny, he can raiſe up *Gideons*, *Jephthahs*, *Samſons*, and ſuch like extraordinary Commanders. Who knows but that he will cauſe a General to ſucceed you, that ſhall have more Courage and Generoſity, and, perhaps, ſhall be bleſſed with a greater Happineſs, and more glorious ſucceſſes? When *Moſes* departed to his Reſt, *Joſhua* commanded in his ſtead, and for that Purpoſe, God enabled him with a noble Spirit of Wiſdom and Courage. Forone Enemy that *Moſes* overcame *Joſhua* deſtroyed Thouſands. Whereas *Moſes* did but coaſt along the Land of *Canaan*, and turn up and down in the Wilderneſs; *Joſhua* brought the People of *Iſrael* into that pleaſant Country, and into a peaceable Poſſeſſion of it. Since therefore it is God's Pleaſure, leave to others the care of temporal Wars, and go ye, gather the pleaſant and delicious Fruits of an eternal Peace, which had been purchaſed unto you by the Blood of the Son of God.

Likewiſe, you faithful Miniſters of *Jeſus Chriſt*, remember to ſhew the example of a Reſignation to God's good Pleaſure, according to your Doctrine. Let not Death cauſe you to draw back. Thou haſt, Brother a Will to glorify God on Earth; well, but thou ſhalt glorify him better in Heaven, with more Zeal, and leſs Impediment. Whilſt thou art fettered with this ſinful Fleſh, thy Miniſtry muſt needs be accompanied with many Imperfections. Thou imagineſt, that if it pleaſed God to prolong thy Days, thou mayeſt be inſtrumental in the Reformation of the World; but thou art miſtaken, Brother; for this World is accuſtomed to Evil, and this Age is hardened in Iniquity: Preach as much as thou wilt to the Inhabitants of this inferior World, it ſhall be as in the Times of *Noah*

the

The Herald of Righteousness, when the Patience of God waited for the Conversion of Sinners; for the whole Earth is so corrupt, that all the Thoughts and Imaginations of the Heart of Man are evil continually. They are rebellious and sinful from the Cradle; and if God doth not interpose his Almighty Hand, and implant in us the Virtue of his Holy Spirit, they will grow worse and worse, until they tumble into their Graves. If thou afflict never so much thy just and innocent Soul, and spend thyself in exhorting the greatest Sinners to fly from the Wrath to come, and the Judgements of God that hang over their guilty Heads; it may be thou shalt be mocked by thy nearest Relations, as *Lot* was by his Sons-in-law. Though thou shouldst thunder out the Threatnings of God's Law against the abominations of *Israel*, as zealously as the Prophet *Isaiah*, thou shalt be forced at last to confess, *I have laboured in vain, I have employed my Strength for nought*, Isa. xlix. Jer. vi. Though thine Eyes should be converted into a fresh Spring of Tears, and thou shouldst spend the Days and the Nights in calling upon the Superstitious, the Schismaticks, and Idolaters, to forsake their false Worship, and their unchristian Proceedings, thou shalt not be able to soften the Hardness of their Hearts, nor overcome their Obstinacy; but they will be ready to speak to thee in the *Jews* Language to *Jeremiah: As for the Word thou hast spoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee; but we will certainly do whatsoever Thing goeth forth out of our own Mouths, to burn Incense unto the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out Drink-Offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cities of* Judah, *and in the Streets of* Jerusalem; *for then we had Plenty of Victuals, and were well, and saw no Evil*, Jerem. xliv. Though thou shouldst speak with a divine Tongue, and with an Heavenly Wisdom, thou mayest have good Cause to cry out, *Who hath believed our Report; and to whom hath the Arm*

of the Lord been revealed? Isa. liii. John xii. In short, as the Rivers of fresh Water, that run continually into the Sea, cannot cure its bitter and salt Qualities; thus thy good and holy Life, thy learned and excellent Sermons, will not be able to remedy the Corruption of this present evil Age, nor stop the Torrent, and hinder the Overflowing of Vice: For thy Labour and Industry, if compared with the Corruption of the World, are as inconsiderable as a few Drops of Water in Comparison to the Ocean. This cursed Earth may be watered by thy Sweat and Tears; it will nevertheless bring forth nothing but Briars and Thistles. The Weeds which thou thinkest to pluck up, will tear thy Skin, and draw Blood out of thy Hands. In short, he that plants is nothing, nor he that watereth, but it is God who giveth the Increase, 1 *Cor.* iii.

It is justly to be feared, that in staying any longer Time in this unwholsome Air, thou mayest receive some evil Impression from the general Contagion. It is to be feared, that thou mayest sully thy pure Hands by handling so many Wounds and Sores, and that the Thorns of this cursed Earth may pluck off the Wool of thy harmless and innocent Life.

But though thou shouldst have a thousand Times more Gifts and Graces, and that thy Labours should bring far greater Advantages and Profit to *Christ's* Church, it belongs not to thee to give Laws to thy God, but to follow the Motion of his Will. Leave to him the chief care of his own Houshold, and rest upon his eternal Providence. He hath more Right in the Church than thou canst pretend to; for he hath created it by his Power, and redeemed it with his precious Blood. He that cares not for his own, especially for those of his Family, hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel. And can God, who is Faithfulness itself, and the very Being of Truth; God, who cannot deny himself, and whose Gifts and Callings are without Repentance, *Rom.* xii. can such a God cast off all Care of his Church, of that which he embraced with an eternal

eternal Love, and cheriſheth as the Apple of his Eye? *Jer.* xxxi. This Father of Mercies, who hath not ſpared his own Son, but hath delivered him to die for his Church, how ſhould he not with him freely give her all Things? *Rom.* viii. He underſtands better than thou, and all the Men in the World, what is proper and advantageous for his holy Congregation, and for every Member that compoſes it. He knows how to provide for all its Wants; for his Wiſdom is infinite, and his providence is moſt wonderful.

When this great God hath a Deſign to plague his Enemies, and to declare his Juſtice, he hath always Agents ready, and his Quiver full of Arrows. As ſoon as he commands the holy Angels, that wait before him, to caſt their Sickles in the Earth, or to reap, or pour down the Phials of his Wrath, theſe holy Spirits fly with an unſpeakable Swiftneſs to perform his ſacred Pleaſure, *Rev.* xiv. and xvi. Likewiſe when he intends to do Good to his Choſen, he finds in every Place the Heralds of his Mercy, and his divine Hand is always full of Bleſſings. As the main Ocean of his wonderful Bounty can never be dried up, likewiſe the Channels by which he conveys them to us ſhall never fail.

The Cauſe of thy Complaints ſhould ſerve to appeaſe thy Grief, nouriſh thy Faith, and increaſe thy Hopes; for if thou art graced with extraordinary Gifts, this proceeds not from thy Nature, nor thine Induſtry, but God's Favour and Bounty. Now thou mayeſt be aſſured, that his Hand is not ſhortened, his great Power is not leſſened, the Well-ſprings of all his Bleſſings and Wonders are not ſtopped nor dried up, *Iſa.* lix. He that ſends a deſired Whiteneſs, the Prognoſtick of an approaching Harveſt to the ſpacious Fields, *Job* iv. he ſends alſo, into his ſpiritual Harveſt, Labourers, when he ſees it convenient. In this latter Age, and in the Old Age of the World, as well as in the firſt Appearance of his Church, *Luke* xix. he finds Men to work in his Vineyard; or rather he forms and faſhions them with the Hand of his Grace, and enables

them by his Holy Spirit; for he gives the Mouth and the Tongue; he maketh deaf, dumb, and blind; and reſtores the Eye-ſight; he calls Things that are not, as if they were, *Matt.* xx. *Exod.* iv. *Rom.* iii.

When he deſigns for himſelf a Tabernacle, he calls by Name a *Bezaleel*, and fills him with the Spirit of Wiſdom, of Underſtanding and Knowledge, in all manner of Workmanſhip, *Exod.* xxxi. When he reſolves to deliver the Children of *Iſrael* from their *Babyloniſh* Captivity, and to build the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, he hath at his Command *Cyrus*, *Darius*, and *Artaxerxes*, *Ezra* vi. 14. He ſtirs up *Zorobabels*, *Eſdraſſes*, and *Nehemiahs*. Likewiſe, when he intends to repair the Breaches of his Houſe, and to increaſe the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, he makes Servants, and fit Agents, and beſtows upon them ſufficient Graces for ſuch a noble Work, *Pſ.* viii. *Matt.* xxi. As he has never left himſelf without Witneſs in doing Good, thus he hath never been without Witneſſes to declare his ſacred Truths, *Luke* xix. By the Mouth of Babes he perfects his Praiſe; and as our Saviour told the *Jews*, *If theſe held their Peace, the Stones would cry out*, Luke xix. God will take the Pillars of the Idol's Temple to prop up his Church, rather than ſuffer it to fall down. He will change the Wolves into Lambs, and the Lambs into Shepherds, rather than his Sheep ſhould want their neceſſary Paſture. He chooſeth the feeble Things of this World to confound the Strong; the Deſpicable, and ſuch as are not, to deſtroy ſuch as are, 1 *Cor.* ix.

Thus God never leaves his Church without ſome Teſtimony of his Favour, ſome powerful Inſtrument of his Grace: But many Times when he removes one good Thing from us, he beſtows upon us ſomething more rare and excellent. This Conſideration glads the Heart of *Joſeph* upon his Death-bed, as appears by what he ſaid to his Brethren; *I am going to die, but God will not fail to viſit you, and cauſe you to go up from hence unto the Land, that he ſware uuto* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *Gen.* l. For inſtead of a *Joſeph*, who had occaſioned

ſioned their Bondage, God raiſed up a *Moſes*, who delivered them with almighty Hand and ſtretched out Arm, 2 *Kings* ii. Thus God took up *Elijah* with a chariot of Fire, but he gave unto *Eliſha* a double Portion of his Maſter's Spirit, and cauſed his glorious Miracles to appear more admirable. Alſo our Lord and Saviour, when he had finiſhed the great Work of our Redemption, aſcended up into Heaven, a Cloud conveying him up to the Throne of his Glory; but, according to the Promiſe, he hath not left us deſtitute, but hath ſent us the Comforter to dwell with us for ever, namely, the Spirit of Truth, whom the World ſeeth not, nor can know, *John* xiv. *Chriſt's* corporal Preſence was enjoyed but by a ſmall Number of People; but this divine Spirit is like a large River, that ſwells and runs over every where, *John* vii. This holy Spirit is not only with us, but alſo within us; he is poured out into our Hearts, he ſeals us for the Day of Redemption; he is the Earneſt of our Inheritance, until the full Conſummation of the Glory reſerved for us in Heaven. Therefore when this merciful Saviour ſaw his Apoſtles afflicted in an extraordinary Manner for his leaving of the World, he ſpeaks to them in this Language; *Becauſe I have ſaid theſe Things unto you, Sorrow hath filled your Hearts: Nevertheleſs, I tell you the Truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you,* John xvi. When St. *Paul* took his laſt Farewel of the Elders and People of the Church of *Epheſus*, they wept bitterly, being grieved to the Heart becauſe he ſaid, *That none of them ſhould ſee his Face any more.* But to comfort them, he aſſures them, that in Heaven they had a Father and Protector, and ſuch a Shepherd as would never forſake them. *I commend you,* ſaith he, *to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them that are ſanctified,* Acts xxii. Remember therefore, O Man of God, ſeriouſly to conſider all theſe Things; if the Lord, who has called thee to the ſacred Function of

the Miniſtry, continues thee in the World, labour with Courage and Diligence in thine holy Employment; be not tired in the Service of this good Maſter, and merciful Saviour; fight the good Fight of Faith; endure patiently all Kind of Labour, as a good Soldier of *Jeſus Chriſt*; be as earneſt and as careful for the Lord's Sheep, as *Jacob* was of thoſe of *Laban*. Hear what he profeſſeth of himſelf, *In the Day the Drought conſumed me, and the Froſt by Night, and my Sleep departed from mine Eyes*, Gen. xxxi. *Jacob* endured patiently theſe grievous Pains and Labour, and the Time of his Service ſeemed to him to be but a few Days, becauſe of the Love that he had for *Rachael*. Likewiſe thou wilt joyfully endure the Troubles of thine Office, and bear with Patience all the Hardſhips, if thou doſt ſincerely love the Lord *Jeſus*, and his heavenly Spouſe; if thou doſt eſteem the Salvation of Souls, for whom *Jeſus Chriſt* hath ſuffered Death; if thou haſt well underſtood the Excellency of thine heavenly Reward, and the Glory prepared for thee, when thou ſhalt have finiſhed the Time of thy painful and difficult Service, and of thy mortal Race: For they who bring many to Righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as the Stars for ever and ever, *Dan.* xii. *Jacob* had to do with a deceitful and unfaithful Man; but God is not a Man, that he ſhould lye, or as the Son of Man, that he ſhould repent, *Gen.* xxiii. *Be thou faithful unto Death, and he will give thee the Crown of Life*, Rev. ii.

If it is the Lord's Pleaſure to leſſen this Taſk, ſo that, inſtead of employing thee in his Vineyard, he intends to take thee up into his Kingdom, to drink there of his new Wine; if at the Time that thou thinkeſt of ſowing with Tears, thou art tranſported to the Place where thou mayeſt reap with Songs of Triumph; if in lieu of the Oppoſition which you muſt ſuffer from Sinners, God will grant unto thee his eternal Conſolations, and receive thee into the harmonious Societies of the Church triumphant, adore his Goodneſs, and his infinite Mercy; caſt thyſelf into his Hands, and reſolve

ſolve chearfully, to will what is pleaſing to him. If during thine Abode in the Valley of Tears, God hath given thee a Livelihood; and if thou haſt found in him thy Joy, thy Satisfaction, and thy greateſt Comfort, Death will be thy Advantage; thou ſhalt find in thy Saviour thy Reſt, thy Glory, and eternal Delights, *Phil.* i. Meditate often upon the Words of the holy Apoſtle St. *Peter*, *The Elders that are amongſt you, I exhort, who am alſo an Elder, and a Witneſs of the Sufferings of Chriſt, and alſo a Partaker of the Glory that ſhall be revealed. Feed the Flock of God which is amongſt you, taking the Overſight thereof, not by Conſtraint, but willingly, not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind; neither as being Lords over God's Heritage, but being Examples of the Flock. And when the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, ye ſhall receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away*, 1 Pet. v.

You alſo, who are afraid to leave behind you a deſolate, afflicted, and comfortleſs Widow; come and learn this Leſſon, to rely upon the Goodneſs and tender Compaſſions of the Father of Mercies, who never fails to comfort the Diſtreſſed in all their Afflictions, and who is always near to them who call upon him in their Troubles, 2 *Cor.* ii. *Pſal.* cxlv. He favours the Widow to that Degree, that he calls himſelf *The Judge of the Widows*, Pſ. lxviii. that is, the Protector of their Integrity and Right, and ſevere Revenger of the Wrongs that they may ſuffer. Therefore God tells us in expreſs Words, *That he maintains the Widow, and eſtabliſheth her Borders*, Prov. xv. Since *Job* was ſo merciful as to cauſe the Widow's Heart to ſing, *Job* xxviii. how much more may ſhe expect from God's Goodneſs? He will doubtleſs fill her with his heavenly Joys, and the raviſhing Comforts of his holy Spirit. I mean not the fooliſh Widows, that ſeek for nothing but Pleaſure, worldly Diverſion, and carnal Paſtime; who live in the Delights of the Age, and *who are dead whilſt they live*; but I mean thoſe wiſe Widows, who being left alone by their Huſband's Death, have their Confidence

and Truſt in God, continuing in Prayer Day and Night.

Our great God, and merciful Lord, hath not only ſaid in general, that he is the Judge, the Protector, and Comforter of the Widow; but he hath vouchſafed to ſome his moſt ſignal Favours, and extraordinary Bleſſings. In the Reign of *Ahab*, while a cruel Famine overſpread the Land, God ſent the Prophet *Elijah* to a poor Widow of *Sarepta*, who was preparing herſelf and her Son to die, as ſoon as they had eaten a little Remnant of Meal and Oil that was left. But the holy Prophet comforted her in this Manner; *Thus ſaith the Lord God of* Iſrael, *The Barrel of Meal ſhall not waſte, neither ſhall the Cruſe of Oil fail, until the Day that the Lord ſendeth Rain upon the Earth*, 1 Kings xvii. Many poor Widows have met with the like miraculous Supplies: For by a ſecret Benediction, God hath cauſed their Proviſions not to fail them. Though perhaps they have not enjoyed any extraordinary Plenty, this all-wiſe Purveyor hath furniſhed them with Things neceſſary for them: So that not only both they and their Children have ſubſiſted in the greateſt Calamities, but they have had the Honour of aſſiſting God's Prophets. And as the poor Widow in the Goſpel gave Alms out of her Poverty; ſuch Mites have been more pleaſing to God, than the Treaſures of the Wealthy. Moreover, when the Son of God was in the World, he was pleaſed to expreſs how much Care and Compaſſion he had of Widows: For when he met at the Gate of the City of *Naim* a poor Widow that wept bitterly for her only Son, who was carried out to be buried, he was moved with a tender Feeling of her Affliction; therefore he raiſed the young Man to Life again, and reſtored him to his Mother. It was alſo at the Solicitation of ſome devout Widows, that St. *Peter* raiſed *Dorcas* from Death to Life. I muſt needs take Notice here of an admirable Story, proper to comfort every faithful Servant of God. The Widow of a deceaſed Prophet made this bitter Complaint to *Eliſha*; *Thy Servant my Huſband is dead, and*

and thou knoweſt that thy Servant did fear the Lord; and the Creditor is come to take unto him my two Sons to be Bondmen, 2 Kings iv. God, who hears the Cry of the Afflicted, had Compaſſion on that poor diſtreſſed Widow, ſo that he gave unto her, by *Eliſha's* Means, in a Wonderful Manner, ſufficient for the Payment of her Debts, and to nouriſh her Family. By this glorious Example, God declares the Care that he will have of his Prophets Widows, whilſt they walk in his Fear, and continue in his holy Covenant.

To conclude, modern and ancient Hiſtories are full of notable Examples of wiſe and virtuous Widows, who have diſcreetly governed their Families, and upon whom God's Bleſſings have viſibly appeared.

Almighty God, who is wonderful in all his Works, cauſeth not only Fathers to make Proviſion for their Children, but he gives to ſome ſuch Children, in his Mercy, who provide for their Fathers, and are an extraordinary Bleſſing to their Family, as *Joſeph* was to *Jacob* and his Houſhold. Such wiſe and virtuous Children, who are ſo neceſſary to their Parents, whom they love and honour, might, out of their great Affection for them, ſpeak to Death in the Language of the young Man in the Goſpel, *Suffer me to go firſt and bury my Father*. Let me alone a-while in the World; ſuffer me to live, O Death, until I have accompanied my Parents to their Grave, until I have cloſed their Eye-lids, and performed the laſt Duties that Nature requires. But hearken, officious Son! what the Lord ſaith to thee; *Let the Dead bury their Dead*, but follow thou me. Leave to them that remain after thee the Care of worldly Affairs, but do thou obey God's Call. Thy Charity for others muſt not cauſe thee to be cruel to thyſelf, and diſobedient to the Command of thy God. Fear not to leave thy Father and Mother, when thou art going to caſt thyſelf into the raviſhing Embraces of thy Spiritual Bridegroom, and of thy Heavenly Father. The great God, who hath given thee, or rather lent thee

thee to them, who cauſed them to ſubſiſt before thou hadſt a Being, can feed and bleſs them without thee. His Mercy is not tied to thy Perſon, nor confined to thine Induſtry. When our Lord and Saviour was upon the Croſs, at the Sight of the bleſſed Virgin, and the Diſciple whom he loved, he ſaid to his Mother, *Woman, behold thy Son*; and to St. *John*, *Son, behold thy Mother*, John xix. *And from that Hour that Diſciple took her unto his own Home.* In like manner, when God calls unto his eternal Reſt him who was the Supporter of his Family, as *Joſeph* was, he provides for them by ſome other Means. So that if *Elkanah* could juſtly ſay to his Wife, when ſhe wept becauſe ſhe had no Child, *Am I not better to thee than ten Sons?* 1 Sam. i. we may ſay with more Reaſon, that God's Grace, his Aſſiſtance, and the Comforts of his holy Spirit, are more worth than ten thouſand Children.

The ſtrongeſt Paſſion, and that which I judge to be the moſt apt to hinder a good Chriſtian, is that which Fathers and Mothers have for their little ones; eſpecially if they be in an Age unable to help themſelves. But that this natural Paſſion may not tranſport us beyond the Limits preſcribed by Reaſon and Piety, conſider well the Promiſe that God made to *Abraham*, *I am thy God, and the God of thy Seed after thee*, Geneſ. xvii. and what St. *Peter* told the *Jews*, *To you, and to your Children, was the Promiſe made, and to all ſuch as are afar off, as many as the Lord our God ſhall call*, Acts ii. Chiefly meditate well on, and imprint in your Minds, that which God ſpake to you from Heaven, by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Leave me thy fatherleſs Children, and I will give them to eat, and let thy Widows truſt in me*, Jer. xlix. God is the Father of us all, but more eſpecially of the Fatherleſs; he hath Compaſſion on them, and provides for all their Neceſſities. Thy Children are more tender to him than to thee; for thou haſt been but a feeble Inſtrument in his Hand to put them into the World: But he is the Creator of their Souls, the Maker of their Bodies and the Redeemer

of

of them both. He loves them with a ſtronger and more conſtant Love than the beſt Fathers, and the moſt tender-hearted Mothers. Therefore he aſſures us by his holy Prophet, that though the Mother ſhould forget the Child to whom ſhe gives ſuck, and though ſhe ſhould have no Pity on the Fruit of her Womb, yet he will never forget us. So that all the Children that fear God, may ſay as *David*, *When my Father and my Mother have forſaken me, the Lord will receive me*, Pſal. xxvii.

If *Job* had a tender Care of the Orphans, *Job* xxxi: and *Pharaoh's* Daughter had Compaſſion on the Tears of a little ſtrange Child, how much more ſhall God, who is the Father of all Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, have Pity on Children, that he hath redeemed with the precious Blood of his only Son? *Exod.* ii. 2 *Cor.* i. Since he hears the Cries of the young Ravens, he will ſoon hear the Prayers, Sighs, and Tears of his Servants Children, *Pſalm* cxlvii. *Matt.* vi. He clothes the Graſs of the Field, which To-day is, and To-morrow is caſt into the Oven, *Geneſ.* ii. How much rather will he clothe your Children, O ye of little Faith? Doth your heavenly Father nouriſh the Birds of the Air? And will he not rather feed your Children, that are better worth than all the Birds together? *John* xiv. In ſhort, ſince God hath had Compaſſion on little *Iſhmael*, and on the Children of *Nineveh*, how much rather will he regard Children who have been ſanctified to him from their Mother's Womb?

Our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, when he was on Earth, took up in his Arms the little Children that were brought to him, laid his Hands upon them, and recommended them to God his Father. And now that he is in Glory, his Love and tender Compaſſion for them is not leſſened. Therefore if we offer him our Children with all our Hearts, he will take them in his Protection, and will ſtretch over them the Arms of his Mercy, that he will never take from them. In ſhort,

ſince

ſince he promiſeth to them the Kingdom of Heaven, and his eternal Felicities, he will not with-hold from them Things needful for this preſent Life.

We can do nothing without God, but God can do all Things without us. A great many Children become debauched, and are ſpoiled by their Parents over-fond Tuiton; whereas many that are out of their Sight, and live when they are departed, ſhew good Examples of Piety and Goodneſs. For Example, in *Iſaac's* Houſe, in the Preſence of this holy Man, there was a profane *Eſau*, a Glutton; whereas *Jacob*, that lived at a Diſtance from his Parents, when he fled for fear of his Brother, had always before his Eyes the *Fear of* Iſaac *his Father*, Gen. xxvi. and xxxi. that is to ſay, the God whom his Father worſhipped. In *Jacob's* Houſe, *Reuben* defiled his Father's Bed with Inceſt; whereas *Joſeph*, in *Potiphar's* Houſe, choſe rather an apparent Death, and preſent Sufferings, than to touch his Maſter's Wife, *Geneſ.* xxxix. *David* had the Unhappineſs to ſee ſome of his Children guilty of Inceſt and Murder, whereas *Joaſh* and *Joſias*, two Orphan Princes, in their tendereſt Infancy became virtuous and religious Kings, zealous for the Service of God. How many Children are there, who notwithſtanding all the Care and Labour of their Fathers, fall into Extremity of Miſery! How many are taken from their Parents Embraces, and dragged from thence to the Gallows! whereas there are others, who, without Father or Parent's Aſſiſtance, do not only eſcape grievous Dangers, but riſe to Honours and Dignities; as *Joſeph* in *Egypt*; *Daniel* in *Babylon*; and *Eſther*, a fatherleſs and poor captive Child, became a Queen; and God made uſe of her, and of her Credit, to deliver his People from *Haman's* Conſpiracy. We ſee every Day that God bleſſeth in an extraordinary Manner many Orphans. Caſt your Eyes upon the Children of the bleſſed Martyrs, and you ſhall find many whom God hath made notable Inſtances of his ſpecial Favours, and of the Mercy that he promiſeth to ſhew unto thouſand Genera-

Generations of them that ſerve him, and obey his holy Commands. Thou ſhalt meet with ſome that are much more happy in this Life, than the Poſterity of the Perſecutors. Thou ſhalt ſee them with Aſtoniſhment beſtow their Alms upon the Children of ſuch as have plundered their Houſes, and ſpoiled their Goods.

Whilſt you are yet in Being, exhort your Children to fear God, to ſerve him, and to addict themſelves with all their Heart to the ſtudy of Piety, that hath the Promiſes of this Life, and the Life to come. Teach them firſt to ſeek the Kingdom of God, and its Righteouſneſs, and all theſe Things ſhall be added to them over and above.

Finally, though your Life ſhould be much more uſeful to your Children than it is, remember what our Lord and Saviour ſaith, *He that loves Son or Daughter more than him, is not worthy of him.* Heaven is far more excellent than the Earth: The Salvation and the Happineſs of our Souls, is to be preferred to all the Conſiderations of Fleſh and Blood. It is not juſt, that ſuch as have given us, or to whom we have given, the Enjoyment of a temporal Life, ſhould hinder us from the Fruition of a ſpiritual and eternal Life. Beſides, when we recommend them to God, we put them into the Protection of a true and wiſe Friend, who is acquainted with their Neceſſities, who is ſo good to procure them that which ſhall be needful for them, and is almighty, able to accompliſh all Things which may be for their Advantage.

Let us therefore conclude, that it is the Duty of a good Father, that fears God, not to reſiſt Death, nor to fly from it, when the Lord calls: But according to the good Example of the ancient Patriarchs, he ought to end his Days willingly; with the Praiſes of God in his Mouth, and with Exhortation to his Children to love him, fear him, and ſerve him with all their Heart; to continue in his holy Covenant, and to prefer him to all the Riches and Honours of this miſerable Earth. And as

when

when our Saviour had beſtowed his Bleſſing upon his Diſciples, a Cloud carried him out of their Sight into Heaven: Likewiſe when a good Chriſtian ſhall have thus given his Bleſſing to his Children, he will ſhut his Eyes to all inferior Things, and think upon nothing but the eternal Bliſs of the heavenly Paradiſe.

If God calls us to himſelf in a miſerable and wretched Time, when our beloved Infants are weeping about our Bed, ready to ſay to us, as *Iſaac* unto *Abraham*, *My Father here is Wood, a Fire and a Knife; but where is the Beaſt for the Burnt-Offering?* Gen. xxii. God cauſeth the viſible Signs of his heavy Diſpleaſure to appear every where; in every Corner we ſee nothing but Fire and Sword: Death's frightful Image, and the fearful Appearance of Maſſacres, do ſcare and terrify us: Deſtruction is come into the holy Places, the Fire hath reached as far as God's own Sanctuary, and nobody is able to deliver us: The Deluge of God's Wrath hath overſpread our Land in ſuch a manner, that, as *Noah's* Dove, we can find no Place to ſet our Feet on: All our Expectation is, that God would alſo reach down his Hand to us from above, to receive us into that Ark which is above the Heavens, and to which our Soul is now departing, *Gen.* viii. If our dear Children ſpeak to us in this Language, let us, with the Courage, Aſſurance and Faith of the Father of the Faithful, return to them this Anſwer, *My Children, the Lord will provide*, Gen. xii. Rom. iv. It is he that acts beyond Probability, and contrary to Expectation; who cauſeth the Dead to live, and calls Things that are not as if they were. He will ſend to you his good Angels to help you in all your Neceſſities. When you ſhall be reduced to the utmoſt Extremity, ready to receive the laſt Stroke of Death, God's Hand will ſtop the Sword of his Juſtice, he will change your Crying and Fears into Joy and eternal Gladneſs. There will be ſome holy and devout Soul, that loves the publick Peace and Tranquillity, that will bring to you the Olive-branch of Peace. God can appeaſe the Tempeſt

Tempeſt with his Breath; at his Command the Winds will be ſtill, and the roaring Waves, that are ready to devour you, will return to their former Tranquillity. Otherwiſe he will preſerve you miraculouſly alive in the Midſt of the greateſt Troubles, and moſt fearful Confuſion. And as *Abraham* found a Ram entangled in a Buſh, likewiſe, in the Midſt of the ſharpeſt Storms of Affliction, and in the moſt intricate Difficulties that you dread, you ſhall find unexpected Sweetneſs and Comforts. And as ſeveral Colours of the beautiful Rainbow appear upon the Cloud, whence proceed the Storms and the Rain; likewiſe thus, in the greateſt Afflictions, God will give you ſome Teſtimonies of his fatherly Care, and of his divine Love. The Confidence that you ſhall have in God, ſhall never be confounded; for the Love of God is ſettled in your Hearts, by the Holy Spirit that he hath given you. The hotter the Fire of Affliction ſhall be, the more and greater Miracles it ſhall bring forth. The higher the Waters of your Flood ſhall riſe, the nearer they will approach your Souls to God, and the nearer you will draw to Heaven, the Place of your Souls everlaſting Reſt. Comfort therefore yourſelves, my dear Children, and aſſure yourſelves, that by the favourable Aſſiſtance of God's Grace and Mercy, we ſhall ſpeedily ſee one another again. I ſhall not return to you, but you ſhall come to me; for I am going to that ſpacious and magnificent Dwelling, whither our Lord and Saviour *Chriſt* is gone before, to prepare a Place for us, and where he will embrace us all. *I am going up to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and to your God.*

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for ſuch as are in any Command, to prepare for Death, by truſting upon God's Providence.

O King of Kings, and Sovereign Lord of the World! I adore thy divine Majeſty, with a real Senſe of thy ſpecial Favour, for having placed me in this honourable Station, advanced me to this Command and Empire, which I am now ready to reſign into thy Hands: Suffer me not to be puffed up with Pride, or to forget my mortal Condition in the Midſt of all this outward Splendour and Glory. While I continue here, grant that I may ſtudy to promote thy Honour and Service, and treat ſuch as are under me as my Fellow-Creatures, and thy Servants: Grant that I may behave myſelf as in thy Sight, and in all my Actions be ready to give up an Account to thee, my great Judge, of my temporal Adminiſtration. Grant that Death may never ſurprize me, but that I may always be prepared to entertain it with Joy, to lay down this Crown and Sceptre, to caſt off this purple Robe, and all theſe Marks of my Authority, to yield them into thy Hands. Wean my Heart and Affections from their temporal and deceitful Vanities, that I may be willing to part with them at thy Command. Let me look up to thy heavenly Kingdom, meditate upon thoſe divine Excellencies of Eternity provided for me, from which Death ſhall have no Power to remove me. I ſubmit myſelf wholly, with all the Riches, Grandeur, and Power, that thou haſt beſtowed upon me, unto thy divine Pleaſure, to diſpoſe of me as thy Wiſdom ſhall judge convenient. But I beſeech thee, good God, take into thy Protection the Subjects that I leave behind. Continue thy Truth and Goſpel to them, and their Poſterity. Grant that my Succeſſor may have the ſame Zeal, Love, and Care for Religion, that he may be a Support to it, and cauſe it to flouriſh more and more. Give to all thy People Grace to love and fear thee, to be united among themſelves, and obedient to Authority. And now, Lord, receive me into thine eternal Mercy, and into that Kingdom where I may glorify thee for ever. Amen.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a Miniſter of the Goſpel, who looks upon Death with Joy and Comfort.

O Univerſal Shepherd and Biſhop of Souls! I cannot ſufficiently acknowledge and value the Graces and Mercies with which I find myſelf bleſſed, and thy Favour in calling me to an Office which the Angels eſteem an Honour to be employed in, and in which thou haſt been active during thine Abode in the World. Thou haſt been pleaſed to appoint me a Miniſter of thy People, and to commit to my Truſt the deareſt and moſt precious Thing in the World, namely, the Church, for which thou haſt expreſſed ſo great a Love, as to give thyſelf and Life to redeem it. I am ſenſible, O Lord, of my Weakneſs and Inſufficiency for ſo weighty a Charge; ſince I am to encounter with the World's Hatred and Cruelty, the Devil's Wiles and Malice, and many Hardſhips beſides, from thoſe who ſhould encourage me. I expect therefore from thy Power and Goodneſs the Aſſiſtance needful to ſupport me under all temporal Difficulties, while thou art pleaſed to continue me in this Employ. Open a wide Gate to the Goſpel of thy Grace, that all People may ſee the Salvation of God: Diſappoint all the Counſels of thine Enemies, and grant that I may neither be frighted nor corrupted in the Diſcharge of my Duty. Subdue Satan *under our Feet, and grant that thy Truth may be always victorious over Error and Hereſy. I am now, Lord, to appear before thee, to give thee an Account of my Stewardſhip. I appeal therefore to thine infinite Knowledge, that can witneſs for me, how faithfully and ſincerely I have endeavoured to perform the Duties of my Calling; and my Conſcience can teſtify for me, that I have declared nothing but what is agreeable with thy divine Oracles. I have endeavoured to inſtruct the Ignorant, to diſcourage Vice and Profaneneſs, to comfort the troubled in Mind, and in all Things to promote Religion, Piety, thy Glory, and the Good of thy Church in the World. I have preferred thy Will and thy heavenly Treaſure to all worldly Advantages; I have*

taken a singular Pleasure in declaring the wonderful Counsels of thy Wisdom, and the Mysteries of thy Kingdom; I have delighted and endeavoured to save Souls; so that I may say with David, the Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up. *But for all this, I pretend not to be justified before thee. In all Humility I cast myself at thy Feet, to implore the Pardon of my frequent Imperfections, Neglects, and Miscarriages, which I have been guilty of in thy Service. I confess I have been wanting in my Zeal and Charity; too remiss in the Reproof of Vice; too much concerned for myself, and too affectionate for my worldly Interest. O Lord, if thou shouldst now treat me according to the Severity of thy Justice, and require from me the Souls perished by my Negligence or evil Example, I should expect the Doom of the unprofitable Servant. But there is Mercy reserved for me with thee, O my God! Accept therefore my Repentance for all the Errors and Omissions of my Life past, and lay them not to my Charge, but comfort me with thy Salvation. Strengthen my Faith, increase my Hope and Assurance in thee. And when Death shall come to make a Dissolution, give me Strength and Grace to welcome it as thy Messenger sent to remove me from my Station, to free me from my Pains and Labour, and convey me to thine eternal Rest, where I shall be no longer sensible of the Viciousness and Impieties of the Age. Gracious God, preserve thy Church and People from all ravenous Wolves and mercenary Souls, and raise up a faithful, solid, wise, and learned Clergy. Bring in our dissenting Brethren, and give a Check to the Spirit of Division, that we may all serve thee in Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace. But now I am called to another Ministry, where I shall meet with no Trouble nor Resistance; no Weariness, Grief, Pain, Sorrow, or Displeasure; where I shall be received into the Embraces of my blessed Saviour, who will lead me to the Fountain of living Water, and wipe away all Tears from mine Eyes.* Amen.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for the Father of a Family.

FATHER of Eternity, I yield unto thee my unfeigned Thanks, becauſe thou haſt made me an happy Inſtrument to put into the World Children, out of whoſe Mouths thou mayeſt accompliſh thine own Praiſe, and who may ſerve thee here below, and worſhip thee for ever in Heaven amongſt the Thouſands of Angels. Whilſt I have been in the World, I have brought them up in thy Love and Fear. I have cauſed them to ſuck from the Breaſt the Milk of Piety; and when they were come to an Age of Underſtanding, I have taught them to walk in thy Precepts. I have laboured to ſhew them a good Example, and to guide them in thy Truth. And now that I am ready to return unto thee, who art the Author of my Life and Being, the only Source of my Happineſs, I leave them in thy merciful Hands, beſeeching thee to look down upon them with the Eyes of thy Compaſſion. They are thine, O Lord, acknowledge thine own Image and Handy-Work. Thy Finger hath faſhioned their Bodies, where ſo many Wonders are to be ſeen; and their Souls, that animate and move them, are the Breath and Beams of thy Divinity. Thou haſt engaged to be our God, and the God of our Poſterity after us. Thy great and precious Promiſes have been made to us, and to our Children. O heavenly Father, I deſire not that thou ſhouldſt take them out of the World, but that thou ſhouldſt keep them from Evil. Cover them under the Shadow of thy Wings, and preſerve them from thoſe Miſeries and Calamities, which thou haſt threatened to ſend upon the Inhabitants of the Earth for their Sins. If thou chaſtiſeſt them, let it be with the Rod of Men, and with the Scourges of the Sons of Men; but withdraw not from them thy Grace and thy Fatherly Compaſſion. Let the Flames of Affliction render their Faith more pure, their Lives more holy, and their Zeal more ſincere and earneſt; and let it prepare them for thee, and thine eternal Bliſs. O holy Father, thou ſeeſt that the Age wherein we live is extremely corrupt, that the Earth is inclined to Vice, and

that Sin reigns every where. Thou knoweſt alſo how weak the Nature of Children is, and how inclinable to Evil; therefore ſtrengthen them, I beſeech thee, with ſuch Antidotes as may preſerve them from the Infection of the Times. Suffer not the Wickedneſs of the World to gain upon their Affections, nor Satan *to prevail upon them by his Suggeſtions, nor Evil Company to ſpoil their pious Education. Give them an Underſtanding to know thee, an Heart to love thee, and Affections to embrace thee and thy Glory. Let thy holy Angels guard them by Night and by Day. Let thy Providence defend them, thy Word inſtruct them, thy Promiſes comfort them, and thy Holy Spirit regenerate them, and imprint in their Souls thy bleſſed Image. Give them neither Poverty nor Riches but nouriſh them with Food convenient. Make them to taſte of the heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come. Inflame them with thy Love and Charity, and adorn them with all Chriſtian Virtues; but chiefly ſanctify them with thy Holy Spirit, and make them to become new Creatures; ſince without Sanctification none ſhall ſee thy Face in Glory. Confirm them for ever in thy Holy Covenant, and give them Grace to tranſmit it to their Poſterity after them, as a bleſſed Inheritance that thou mayeſt be glorified by them from Generation to Generation, to all Eternity. Suffer not the World, nor Hell, to pluck them out of thine Hand, that nothing may ſeparate them from the Love which thou haſt ſhewed to them in Jeſus Chriſt thine only Son. Let not Death terrify them; but let it rather rejoice and comfort them, becauſe that it is the Entrance to the glorious Dwelling of their heavenly Father, and to the celeſtial Paradiſe. Whatſoever Change or Alteration ſhall happen here below, let them always lift up their Eyes to thee, who art the ſame Yeſterday and To-day, and ſhalt be the ſame for ever. Let them never forget their Duty to thee, from whom they have received their Being and Life, that they may prefer the Glory of thy great Name, the Purity of thy Worſhip and the Hopes of thy heavenly Kingdom, to all worldly Glory, Magnificence, Riches, Advantages, and Pleaſures of the Fleſh. Merci-*

ful and almighty Lord, I ſhall not ſay to thee as Eſau *did to* Iſaac, *when he had bleſſed* Jacob, My Father, haſt thou but one Bleſſing? *For I am certain, that thou haſt an infinite Number and many inexhauſtible Fountains of all Manner of Bleſſings. But I beſeech thee with all the Zeal and Earneſtneſs that I am capable of, to bleſs my dear Children with thy heavenly and principal Favours. Take them into thy Protection, bear them in thy Hands, embrace them with tender Compaſſion, and let them be as dear to thee as the Apple of thine Eye. I am now leaving the World, and my Children, without Grief or miſtruſting thy Care of them. I am aſcending with Joy up to thee, who art my God, my Father, and their Father; and I truſt in thy great and eternal Mercies, one Day we ſhall ſee one another in thine heavenly Kingdom, when we ſhall be admitted to behold thy Face, which ſhall fill us with unſpeakable Gladneſs and Pleaſure.* Amen.

CHAP. XIII.

The firſt Conſolation againſt the Fear of Death: GOD *will not forſake us in our moſt grievous Agonies.*

MAN is naturally afraid of Pain, and abhors Sufferings and Grief. Now the moſt of us are perſuaded, that it is impoſſible to die without enduring great Torments; therefore they abhor Death, not ſo much for its own Sake, as for the Evils it inflicts upon us.

That we may be able to drive away this ill-grounded Fear, and ſtrengthen our Minds againſt all Apprehenſions, we muſt firſt conſider, that Death is not ſo dreadful and painful as is commonly imagined. The Holy Ghoſt calls it a Sleep, and the Heathens themſelves have ſaid, that Sleep is Death's Couſin-german, and the Image of frozen Death. Now Sleep creeps upon us inſenſibly, it charms our Senſes ſoftly, and with

inviſible Fetters it ties and ſtops all our moſt active Faculties. Though we ſleep every Night, we are not able to diſcover how this happens to us. It is ſaid of *Socrates*, one of the moſt famous Men of the firſt Ages, having in Obedience to the Decree of the *Athenian* Judges, drank Poiſon, when he felt the Venom benumbing his Senſes, and Death creeping into his Veins, he declared with a pleaſant Countenance, *That he had never ſwallowed any Thing more ſweet and comfortable.* Nothing can be imagined more pleaſant than the Death of the old Patriarchs. The holy Scripture tells us, that when *Jacob* had made an End of commanding his Sons, he gathered up his Feet into the Bed, and yielded up the Ghoſt, *Gen.* xlix. The ſame is related of King *David*, that when he had perſuaded *Solomon to fear God, and to do Juſtce, he ſlept with his Fathers*, 1 Kings i. God is as merciful to many in theſe latter Days, to cauſe them to die in ſpeaking and calling upon his holy Name. Their Souls are not plucked from them by Violence; but of their own Accord they leave the Body, and fly into Heaven with an holy Chearfulneſs. The Separation of ſuch Souls happens without Pain, Grief, or Suffering. Such are like to a Taper, that goes out without any Blaſt of Wind, of its own Accord, when the Wax that keeps it alive, and nouriſhes its Flame, is totally ſpent. If you perceive ſome toſſed and tortured with grievous Pangs on their Death-bed, they are not properly the Pangs of Death, but the laſt Strugglings and Motions of Life: For I cannot imagine, that at the Moment of the Separation of our Souls from our Bodies, we ſuffer any Pain; becauſe at that Inſtant the Senſes are then lulled aſleep, and our Bodies have no more Strength, nor Life, to hinder the Soul's departing.

Death is ſo far from being ſo dreadful and painful as we commonly imagine, that on the contrary, it is that very Thing that puts an End to all our Pains and Miſeries. And I am perſuaded, that the Diſeaſes that bring us to our Graves, are not ſo grievous as the other

other Diſtempers that we endure whilſt we live here on Earth, ſuch as are a cruel Gout, a Stone in the Kidneys, or a Cancer in the Breaſt; for they are Tortures that rack us continually, and a Fire that conſumes us without ceaſing. But if our Pains ſhould be far more ſenſible, and that we ſhould have Reaſon to impute them to Death, we have no Reaſon therefore to fly from it, or abhor its Approaches: For we have as good cauſe to curſe the Hour of our Birth, and weep for our Victories; for there is no Birth without Pain, nor Victory without Struggling. The moſt glorious and flouriſhing Laurels are watered with Blood and Sweat.

The moſt excellent Things are attained with the greateſt Difficulties; and to ſpeak according to the common Saying, as *One Nail drives another*, ſo one Evil is a Remedy to many other Evils. We commonly ſeek, as a good Thing, that Evil that frees us from the violent Pains that we can ſcarce endure, To be healed of our Diſtempers, we ſwallow bitter Pills and Potions, to gripe and torment our Bowels. To be freed from the Stone, we ſuffer a moſt painful Cutting; and that the Gangrene, which infects one of our Limbs, might not get to our Heart, we endure it with Patience to be cut off, whether it be Arm or Leg. Therefore, tho' Death ſhould be much more grievous, bitter, and more cruel, than is commonly repreſented, yet we ought to embrace it willingly, becauſe it delivers us not only from ſome one Diſeaſe, or ſome particular Pain, but in general from all Pains, Aches, and Diſtempers. The Phyſick expels not always the Humour that diſquiets us. When we have drawn out a Stone from the Bladder, many Times others grow in the Place that are worſe. The Surgeon's Hand, let it be ever ſo expert, anſwers not always to the Patient's Expectation; inſtead of removing his Pain, it ſometimes increaſeth it. But the Working and Cure of Death is always certain, and never fails; the Succeſs is always happy to a Chriſtian Soul.

That I may ſupply thee with ſome Comfort in the Midſt of thy great Pains and Sufferings, *my Brother* or *my Siſter*, remember that theſe Things happen to thee not by Chance, but God appoints them as his Wiſdom judges convenient. Aſcribe not thy Diſeaſe to the Influence of the Stars, to blind Fortune, *&c.* but lift up thine Eyes to his Appointment, who hath ſtretched out the Heavens, and commanded the Succeſſion of the Seaſons, and who is the Author and Lord of thy Life. We need not tempt God, as the *Philiſtines* of old, and require from him a Miracle, to know if it be his Hand; for God aſſures us, that he himſelf inflicts the Wound, and binds it up; that his Hand ſtrikes, and heals again, 1 *Sam.* v. *Affliction cometh not forth of the Duſt, neither doth Trouble ſpring out of the Ground*, Job v. Who is able to ſay that theſe Things are come to paſs, and the Lord hath not commanded them? Doth not Evil and good proceed from the Appointment of the moſt High? There is no Evil in the City but God hath done it; that is to ſay, that there is no Diſtemper, nor Affliction, but he overrules and governs it by his wonderful Providence.

This Perſuaſion will ſtop our Murmuring in the Midſt of our greateſt Trouble and violent Pains: It will cauſe us to ſay with *David*, *I have held my Peace, Lord, and have not opened my Lips, becauſe it was thy Doing.* Or if we offer to ſpeak, it will be in the Language of a bleſſed Servant of God, *Lord, thou troubleſt me; but it is ſufficient for me to know that it is thy Hand*, Job ii. As if he ſhould have ſaid, This Phyſick is very bitter, O greas Phyſician of my Soul and Body; but I will freely drink it up, becauſe thou haſt preſcribed it. It is not juſt to receive Good at the Hand of God, and refuſe Evil; to complain of a Diſeaſe that he hath ſent us for a few Days, inſtead of bleſſing him for the Health which he hath continued to us many Years. In ſhort, when our Souls ſhall be troubled with Anguiſh of Death, when Drops of Blood ſhall come out of our Veins, we muſt in ſuch a Caſe lift onr Eyes to Heaven,

Heaven, and ſay with our Lord and Saviour, *Father, if it pleaſe thee that this Cup ſhould not paſs away from me, except I drink it, thy Will be done.*

The ſame Conſideration will keep us from falling into Deſpair, and from fancying, that the Evils will ſwallow us up: For ſince God ſends both Evil and Good, and that he is faithful and juſt, that he is true and merciful, he will not ſuffer us to be tempted, that is, that we ſhould be afflicted above that we are able, but with the Temptation he will make Way to eſcape, that we may be able to bear it, 1 *Cor.* x. He kindles not all his Wrath at once, and employs not all his Fury. He diſcovers not all the Strength of his Arm, *Pſal.* lxxviii. but when his Anger is hotteſt, he remembers to have Pity and Compaſſion on the Afflicted; for he knows of what we are made, and that we are but Duſt and Aſhes, *Hab.* iii. He remembers that we are but Fleſh, that is to ſay, Weakneſs itſelf, a Wind that paſſeth away, and returneth not again, *Pſ.* lxxviii. He regulates his Chaſtiſements, not according to the Horridneſs of our Sins, but according to our great Weakneſs, *Gen.* xviii. *Pſ.* lxxviii. Therefore, when God ſpeaks of *David's* Son, the true and lively Image of the holy Seed with whom he had concluded an eternal Covenant, he ſpeaks in this Manner: *If he commit Sin, I will chaſtiſe him with the Rod of Men, and with the Stripes of the Children of Men; but my Mercy ſhall not depart away from him,* 1 Sam. vii. And St. *Paul,* treating in General of the Afflictions with which God viſits his Children, 1 *Cor.* x. he ſtyles them *Human Temptations,* to aſſure us, that they ſhall never exceed the Strength and Power of Human Nature.

The wiſe and experienced Phyſician appoints neither Phyſic nor Bleeding to the Patient, until he hath well examined his Pulſe, and underſtood thereby the Diſpoſition of his Body; and ſhall not God's eternal Wiſdom, that never acts without good Reaſon, and that perfectly knows the Pulſe and Temper of our Souls, that ſearcheth our Reins, and ſees our very Heart,

propor-

proportion his Phyſic and Remedies to our Weakneſſes? For his Deſign is to heal, and not to deſtroy us. He once inflicted Puniſhments upon *Babylon* by Meaſure, and numbered the Phials of his Wrath which he poured upon the Seat of the Beaſt: And ſhall not this good God meaſure the Rods, and weigh the Afflictions with which he reproves his Children? Shall not he number their Sighs and Tears? This Conſideration comforts King *David*, *Thou*, ſaith he, *O God, telleſt my Wanderings; put thou my Tears into thy Bottle: are they not written in thy Book?* Pſ. lvi. Although Fleſh and Blood may think otherwiſe, I am perſuaded, that Diſeaſes may be looked upon as the ſweeteſt and moſt favourable Affliction. It was *David's* Perſuaſion; for when he was to chuſe one of theſe three Plagues, either War, Famine, or Plague, which is the moſt grievous, moſt hated, and dreadful of all Diſtempers, he choſe the Plague. We ſhould never forget the Reaſon of his Choice. *Let us fall now* (ſaith he to the Prophet *Gad*) *into the Hands of the Lord*, for his Mercies are great, *and let me not fall into the Hand of Man.*

The Evils which God ſends to us, are Expreſſions of Love, and of his fatherly Care of us: For God begins his Judgements, that is, his Chaſtiſements, at his own Houſe, and ſhews moſt Severity to his Servants, whom he loves beſt, 1 *Pet.* iv. Therefore he tells the Angel of the Church of *Laodicea*, *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten*, Rev. iii. The greateſt Affliction that can happen to us in the World, is, never to be afflicted; and the moſt grievous Temptation, is never to be tempted. St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks moſt excellently upon this Subject. *Forget not*, ſaith he, *the Exhortation which ſpeaketh unto you as unto Children. My Son, deſpiſe not thou the Chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with Sons; for what Son is he whom the Father chaſteneth not? But if ye be without Chaſtiſement, where-*

whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Baſtards, and not Sons, Heb. xii.

All Things work together for Good to them that love God, *Rom.* viii. The Diſeaſes of the Body are the Phyſick of the Soul. The Aches which afflict thee are Inſtructions to thy Mind. God intends to make thee ſigh for thy Sins, to water thy Couch with thy Tears, and abhor the Remembrance of thy former Miſcarriages, *Pſ.* vi. By the Cauſes of thy preſent Pain and Grief, he intends to taint thy Fleſh, mortify thy Luſt, and make thee partake of his Holineſs, *Heb.* xii. If it pleaſe God to ſanctify his Afflictions to thee, thou wilt be able to ſay with *David*, *It was good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy Commandments. Before that I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now I keep thy Word*, Pſ. cxix.

Though our Lord and Saviour was the only Son, and the Beloved of the Father, *Heb.* v. yet he learned Obedience by the Things that he ſuffered. God hath predeſtinated thee to render thee conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the Firſt-born among many Brethren. God propoſes to ſtrengthen thee with an holy Conſtancy, and to teach thee to poſſeſs thy Soul with Patience, *Luke* xxi. He cauſed thee therefore to learn by Experience, that all Fleſh is as Graſs, and all the Glory of Man as the Flower of Graſs. He deſigns to humble thee under his mighty Hand, that he may lift thee up in due Time, 1 *Pet.* iii. When God purpoſed to bring the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, *Exod.* xxi. 5. he cauſed the Yoke of their grievous Bondage to be more heavy, and loaded them with more intolerable Burdens. For the ſame Reaſon God ſends Afflictions, and fills us with Bitterneſs, becauſe he would bring us to a Loathing of the World, and of its Vanities, and to think upon Heaven, and its eternal Happineſs. 1 *Cor.* xi. He chaſtiſeth thee, that thou mayeſt not periſh with the World; he puniſheth thy Body, that thy Soul might be ſaved.

As the Gold is tried in the Fire, thus the Lord caſts us into the Flames of Affliction, that our Faith might be

be tried, and appear more precious than fine Gold, 1 *Cor.* v. We glory in God in the Midſt of Tribulations, knowing that Tribulation produceth Patience, Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, 1 *Pet.* iii. Now Hope doth not make us aſhamed, becauſe the Love of God is ſpread in our Hearts by the Holy Ghoſt, which hath been given to us. God will kindle again thy languiſhing Zeal, and enliven thy Prayers, that they may be more acceptable to him. Tell me not that thy Diſtemper is an heavy Burden, that hinders thy Soul from lifting itſelf towards Heaven, and that thy grievous Aches dry up the Moiſture of thy Tongue, and cauſe thy Lips to ſtick together; for I mean not the Prayers compoſed by Art, but the holy Affections and earneſt Sighs of the Soul, ſent up to God. A Groan of an oppreſſed Soul, and Sigh from us by Neceſſity, and a Tear dropped from a penitent Heart, are far more acceptable to him, than Prayers of forty Hours, that come forth of an hypocritical Mouth.

When the Prophet *Moſes* ſaw himſelf incloſed between *Pharaoh's* Army and the *Red Sea*, he was ſo grievouſly perplexed, that he could not open his Mouth; but God heard the Voice of his Heart, and anſwered his ſilent Requeſt. King *Hezekiah* muttered as the Crane, or as the Swallow, and groaned as the Pigeon; and God had a Reſpect to his Groaning and Tears, and heard him from his holy Sanctuary. The Sighs of *Jonas* in the Whale's Belly mounted up through the Waves of the Sea, and aſcended to the ſacred Habitation of God's Glory. The Cries of *Jeſus* dying upon the Croſs have pierced through the Boſom of our heavenly Father, and have moved the Bowels of his eternal Mercies. In ſhort, God ſpeaks thus of all his Children, *Before they cry, I will grant them their Requeſt; and as they ſhall yet be ſpeaking, I ſhall have heard them.* Therefore the Royal Prophet ſaith not only, *That God hath heard the Prayers, but hath heard the Deſire of the Humble; thou wilt prepare their Hearts, thou wilt cauſe thine Ear to hear.* For that Reaſon, when

when the Apoſtle St. *Paul* makes mention of that Spirit that ſupports our Weakneſſes, and that teacheth us to pray, he ſaith, *That he crieth in our Hearts, Abba, Father, and maketh Requeſt for us with Sighs and Groans that cannot be uttered,* Rom. viii.

Take good Courage, *my Brother*, or *my Siſter*, and be not frighted at the Sight of Death. Thou ſeeſt a narrow Paſſage, a Way all beſet with Thorns and Briars; but it is Heaven's Gate, and the Way that leads to thy heavenly Paradiſe; for we muſt of Neceſſity march through a Valley of Tears, before we can enter into the City of the living God, *Pſ.* lxxxiv. We muſt paſs through many Tribulations to come to the Kingdom of Heaven, *Acts* xiv. Bleſſed are they whom God afflicts, for they ſhall be comforted, *Matt.* v. Bleſſed is the Man that ſuffereth Temptation; for when he ſhall be ſufficiently proved, he ſhall receive the Crown of Life, which God promiſeth to them that love him, *James* i. The Lord ſends thee that Affliction, and this grievous Temptation, not only for thine own Good and Salvation, but alſo for the Benefit of others. By his wonderful Wiſdom he preſerves the Communion of Saints, and ſo diſpoſeth of every one, that we all contribute to the Building of his Tabernacle. Upon one he beſtows Riches, that he ſhould be bountiful in Almsdeeds; to another he gives Learning, that he might inſtruct the Ignorant, and comfort the Afflicted; he raiſeth others to great Honours and Dignities, that they might be able to protect the Innocent, and deliver the Oppreſſed. Others are afflicted with deſperate Evils, and grievous and long Diſeaſes; others are deprived of their moſt needful Senſes, as of their Eye-ſight, or of their Hearing, that they might edify their Neighbours by an holy Conſtancy and Chriſtian Patience. The Aſhes of poor *Job* have more Luſtre than all the Gold and precious Stones in the World. It is many Ages ſince he endured grievous and dreadful Calamities; nevertheleſs, his Patience is yet propoſed to us for our Example, and to the End of the World it will always inſtruct the Church of God. He teacheth

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thee by the Evils which thou endureſt, to be moved with Mercy and Compaſſion towards others in the ſame Condition: For as he required, that the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould be gracious to Strangers, becauſe they had been Strangers in the Land of *Egypt*; likewiſe he ſends to thee Afflictions, that thou mighteſt pity the Afflicted, and ſuffer with them, as Members of the ſame myſtical Body. This appears in *Jeſus Chriſt* our Head; for though the chief End of his Sufferings was to redeem us, and to reconcile us to God the Father, nevertheleſs the Holy Ghoſt informs us, that he was like unto us in all Things, Sin excepted, that he might be a merciful High-Prieſt, and have Compaſſion on our Infirmities.

Finally, the Affliction that grieves thee, is not only ſent to thee for thy Salvation, and for the Inſtruction of thy Neighbours, but alſo for the Glory of the great and living God, who hath made and formed thee; for we may ſay of every Diſeaſe that happens to good Men, as *Chriſt* ſays of *Lazarus's* Diſtemper, *This Sickneſs is not unto Death, but for the Glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified by it.* Thou mayeſt be ſevere to thyſelf; but thou muſt be charitable to others, and judge diſcreetly of thy Brethren's Afflictions. When thou art in Pain and Trouble, think ſeriouſly upon thy Miſcarriages, and turn unto God with all thy Heart; but when thou ſeeſt others caſt upon a Bed of Sickneſs, do not argue from thence, as *David's* Enemies, that it is becauſe they have committed ſome grievous Crime; rather conſider, that it may be a Means which God deſigns to employ to declare his Power, and his Servants Patience, Faith, Piety, and Virtues. Therefore our Lord and Saviour tells the Apoſtles, when at the Sight of a Man blind from his Birth, they enquired from him, Whether the Man had ſinned, or his Father or Mother, becauſe he was born blind? *That neither the Man, nor his Father, nor Mother had ſinned, but that the Works of God might be made manifeſt in him,* John ix. By theſe Words we are not to imagine, that they were without Sin; for there is none juſt, no not one; but

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we muſt underſtand, that they were not guilty of an heinous Sin, nor had committed any ſuch Crime as had drawn upon them the Vengeance from above. It was God's Will that this poor Man ſhould come into the World with natural Imperfection, that he might make him an Inſtance of his Grace, and declare in him his almighty Power; and that our Saviour, in giving him his Sight, might make appear that he was the true God, who faſhions the wonderful Eye, and that he was the true Light, that enlightens every Man coming into the World, *Pſ.* xciv. *John* i. Likewiſe when ſome came to inform this great and wiſe Saviour, what had happened to the *Galileans*, whoſe Blood *Pilate* mingled with their Sacrifices, he replied in this manner, *Suppoſe ye that theſe* Galileans *were Sinners above all the* Galileans, *becauſe they ſuffered ſuch Things? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh. Or thoſe eighteen, upon whom the Tower of* Siloam *fell and ſlew them, think ye that they were Sinners above all Men that dwelt in* Jeruſalem? *I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh*, Luke xiii.

God is glorified divers Ways by the Afflictions and Calamities which he ſends to his Children: For, firſt, he juſtifies them before all the World from the Calumnies which are caſt upon them; and he diſcovers thereby to all the Sincerity of their Love, and their unfeigned Obedience. *Satan* accuſeth us for ſerving God for the Advantages which we receive in this Life, *Job* i. becauſe he is pleaſed to protect and favour us by his over-ruling Providence: Therefore God removes many times from us that which is pleaſing and delightful to the Fleſh; he gives us the Bread of Affliction for our Food, and the Waters of Sorrow for our Drink; he preſents us with Cups full of Bitterneſs, and cauſeth his Rod to return upon us often. By theſe grievous Temptations he ſtops the Mouth of the Accuſer of our Brethren, who accuſeth them Day and Night before God, *Rev.* xii. He declares by that Means to all the Enemies of our Salvation, and of his Glory, that we

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put their full Confidence in God alone, and in his unchangeable Promises, and not in the outward Tokens of his Mercy and Favour, *Rev.* ix. He shews to all the World, that the Anchor of our Hope is not fixed here below, but that it is fastened in Heaven, where *Christ* is entered as our Fore-runner, *Heb.* vi.

As God is glorified in Afflictions, he is also honoured by our Deliverance: If the Land of *Judea* had not been peopled with Deaf, Dumb, Lame, Blind, Decrepit, and possessed with Devils, *Acts* ix. if *Æneas* had not been sick eight Years, if a poor Woman had not been grieved with a Bloody-Flux twelve Years, if another had not been vexed with the Disease that had bent her Body, if the Sick of the Palsy had not been lying in his Bed thirty-eight Years, if the Daughter of *Jairus* had not been dead, if the Widow's Son of the City of *Naim* had not been carried to the Grave, in short, if *Lazarus* had not been buried four Days, the Glory and divine Miracles of our Lord and Saviour had not been admired all over the World, *Matt.* ix. *Luke* xiii. *John* v. Likewise our desperate Diseases, and our unexpected Recoveries, when human Skill can do nothing, declare to the most senseless Souls, that it is God alone that can give the Wound, and bind it up, and that leads to the Sepulchre, and brings back again, *Luke* vii. *John* xi. *Job* v. 1 *Sam.* ii. God's Deliverances of his People from their Afflictions are of two Sorts; for either he takes away the Burden from us, or he stretcheth out to us his merciful Hand, and helps us to bear it; either he removes his Affliction, and pacifies our Grief, or he strengthens us with Power and Courage, and arms us with Patience, and a generous Resolution needful in such a Case. This appears in a notable Manner in the Apostle St. *Paul*; for fear that he should be lifted up in Pride, because of the Excellency of his divine Revelations, God gave him a Thorn in the Flesh, and sent the Angel of *Satan* to buffet him, and to increase the Bitterness and Sharpness of his Disease. This holy Man prayed often to remove

move it from him, but God took not his Thorn away from his Fleſh; nor did he check that Meſſenger of *Satan* that afflicted him; but he delivered him in a more illuſtrious Manner: For he ſtrengthened him with his Divine Spirit; enriched him with his Graces; he made him feel the Virtue and Power of *Chriſt* within him, and accompliſhed his Virtue in *Paul's* Infirmity: Inſomuch that this great Apoſtle cries out in the ſharpeſt of his Affliction, with Tranſports of Joy, *I take Pleaſure in Infirmities, in Reproaches, in Neceſſities, in Perſecution, in Diſtreſſes, for Chriſt's Sake; for when I am weak, then I am ſtrong: I can do all Things in Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*, 2 Cor. xii. This may be alſo ſeen in the Martyr St. *Stephen*; for he was condemned to die a Death the moſt painful and grievous that we can imagine; but God gave him ſuch powerful Comforts, and filled his Mind with ſuch Joys, that his Face ſhined as that of an Angel. You muſt underſtand the Words of St. *Paul* in that Manner, in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, Acts vi. Heb. v. Jeſus Chriſt having offered up Prayers and Supplications, with ſtrong Crying and Tears, unto him that was able to ſave him from Death, was heard, in that he feared; for he was not altogether freed from the Sufferings and Torments of the Croſs; but he endured them courageouſly, and was more than Conqueror in all Things. He drank up the very Dregs of the Cup of God's Wrath; but by his divine Power he overcame the Strength of the Poiſon: His heavenly Father took him not down from the Croſs, nor out of the Hands of his Murderers; but he hath erected upon it his glorious Trophies, and the Croſs hath been as his triumphing Chariot. Likewiſe, when you ſee a Chriſtian bear up in the midſt of a grievous Affliction, and overcome his Grief by his Conſtancy and Patience, who inſtead of Mourning rejoiceth, and comforts himſelf in his Diſtreſſes; you may then conclude, that ſuch an one is ſtrengthened by God's Divine Spirit, who upholds him, and accom-

plisheth his heavenly Virtue in his Servant's Infirmity. This is the most miraculous and excellent of all Deliverances.

I confess, some approve this Discourse very well, and admit these Consolations in their ordinary Diseases; but as soon as any extraordinary and violent Grief seizes upon them, they are apt to murmur against God, and to complain, that their Punishment is too grievous. Some proceed farther, to curse, as *Job*, the Day of their Birth; and, being brought into Despair, are ready to cry out with *Cain*, *My Punishment is greater than I am able to bear*. Unhappy Man! Wilt thou imitate the barbarous Heathens, who curse the Sun when it burns them, and let fly their Arrows against Heaven when it thunders? Wretched Man! What will it avail thee to affront thy Creator? What Advantage wilt thou reap from the Blasphemies which thou belchest forth against the Sun of Righteousness? Miserable Worm of the Earth! contemptible Dust! wilt thou undertake to contend with God, to pluck him from his Throne, and break the invincible Arm of his Power? Dost thou imagine to stop the Hand of his Vengeance, by offending and sinning against him? Wilt thou quench the Fury of his Wrath, by spitting in his Face? Believest thou, that he will stretch forth his Hand to deliver thee, and to increase thy Blessings, whilst thy Mouth is open to blaspheme him, who is thy Sovereign Lord?

Listen well, I beseech thee, Friend, to my Advice, and I will help thee out of the Labyrinth where thou art unhappily intangled; and, with God's Help, I will cause thee to understand, that thou complainest wrongfully against him, who performs all Things advisedly, and with Justice and Reason.

1. Run over the whole Course of thy Life, and consider how many wicked Acts thou hast committed; some by Indiscretion, others wilfully; how many Words have escaped out of thy Mouth, how many Thoughts have been entertained in thy Mind, against the

the Commands of Almighty God: Conſider ſeriouſly the Number and Heinouſneſs of thy Sins and Miſcarriages, and thou ſhalt find that God's Puniſhments are far leſs than thy Deſerts; and that, for one ſenſible Stroke of a bitter Pain that thou feeleſt, thou haſt deſerved many Thouſands; ſo that thou ſhalt have Cauſe to confeſs with the Prophet *Daniel, O Lord, Righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us Confuſion of Face*, Dan. ix. And thou wilt ſay with *David, Innumerable Evils have compaſſed me about, mine Iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up; they are more than the Hairs of my Head; therefore my Heart faileth me; there is no whole Part in my Fleſh, becauſe of thine Indignation, nor Reſt in my Bones, becauſe of my Sins*, Pſal. xl.

2. Conſider how many are in the World to be preferred before thee for Piety, and yet ſuffer ſharper and longer Evils than thou haſt hitherto endured, and have not had ſo much Comfort and Aſſiſtance. If thou compareſt thy Condition with theirs, thou ſhalt find that God ſpares and favours thee very much.

3. Caſt thine Eyes upon the Death and Paſſion of our Lord and Saviour, who, being juſt and innocent, hath ſuffered for us wicked and abominable Sinners. Thine Affliction is painful, I confeſs; but that which thy merciful Redeemer has undergone for thee, was far more inſufferable. Let his Exclamations, his Tears, and Drops of Blood, which came out of his Veins, be a Witneſs; and that earneſt Prayer which he repeated three Times upon his bended Knees, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me, that I may not drink it.* Let that doleful Voice upon the Croſs declare it, *My God, My God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*

4. Weigh, in juſt and equal Scales of the Sanctuary, all the Sufferings of this Life, with the Torments of Hell which thou haſt juſtly deſerved. Compare them together, and thou wilt quickly conclude, that all thy Pains are nothing in Compariſon to the grievous Tor-

tures of that Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, where there is Weeping and Gnaſhing of Teeth. If thou art ſenſible of theſe vaniſhing Pains, conſider well how much thou art obliged to the Goodneſs of God, who hath freely pardoned all thine Offences, and redeemed thee from that eternal and unſpeakable Miſery of the other Life.

5. Thou muſt imitate thoſe Men, who having their Sight dimmed with the extraordinary Splendour of bright Colours, or of a Body of Light, turn off their Eyes to look upon leſs offenſive Objects. Inſtead of handling always the Wounds and Sores, inſtead of thinking upon the Afflictions that lie heavy upon thee, meditate upon the Goodneſs and Favour of God, vouchſafed to thee ſince thy Conception until now. I give thee Leave to put in one Side of the Scales all thy Croſſes, Loſſes, Diſeaſes, Pains and Grief, upon Condition that in the other Scale thou wilt caſt all the Mercies, Favours, Bleſſings, and Deliverances, which thou haſt received from God's liberal Hand. It is true thou groaneſt under thy Miſery, and complaineſt of thy Condition; thou verily believeſt that there is none ſo miſerable as thou art, ſo that willingly thou wouldſt ſay with the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Doth not this move ye, O ye that paſs by? Behold and ſee if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the Day of his fierce Anger.* But though there ſhould be nothing elſe but this alone, that God hath called thee to the Knowledge of his holy Will, enriched thee with the Graces of his Divine Spirit, and ſown in thy Heart the Seeds of eternal Life, and the bleſſed Hopes of ſeeing his Face in Glory; thou oughteſt to look upon thyſelf as one of the happieſt Creatures under Heaven.

6. Finally, Thou muſt meditate with a religious Attention upon the Joys, and the eternal Bleſſedneſs, of Paradiſe: *For I reckon*, with the Apoſtle, *that the Sufferings of this preſent Life are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed unto us*, Rom.

Rom. vii. When we caſt our Eyes upon the Earth alone, we judge it to be very ſpacious and large. Our Sight is loſt in the Contemplation of ſo many Provinces, Cities, and Kingdoms; but, when we compare it with Heaven, we find it to be but a Point. Likewiſe, when we look upon and reckon up the Hours, Days, Weeks, Months, and Years of our Sufferings, the Time appears very tedious and long; but, when we compare all theſe Parcels of Time with Eternity, they ſeem to us but a Moment. Though we ſhould have been plunged in the Depths of Evils and Miſeries, from the firſt Inſtant of our Entrance into the World, until the laſt of our going out; yet we have Reaſon enough to ſay with St. *Paul, Our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory; while we look not on the Things which are ſeen, but on the Things which are not ſeen; for the Things which are ſeen are temporal, but the Things which are not ſeen are eternal,* Cor. iv.

The only Spring of all our Comforts is God's gracious Promiſe of ſeaſonable Help in Time of Need. Imprint therefore in your Minds theſe divine Paſſages, *When he that loveth me ſhall call upon me, I will anſwer him; I will be with him in Trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him,* Pſal. xci. *The Lord delivers from all Temptations them that honour him; he is rich unto all that pray unto him,* 2 Pet. ii. *He is near to all them that call upon him; yea to all them that call upon him faithfully,* Rom. x. *He accompliſheth the Deſire of the Humble, he hears their Cry,* Pſal. cxlix. *The Righteous is encompaſſed with many Evils, but the Lord will deliver him from them all,* Pſal. xxxiv. *Call upon me in the Day of thy Diſtreſs, and I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me,* Pſal. lviii. When a poor Subject is courted and viſited by his Prince, in the Time of his Sickneſs, he looks upon it as a great Favour and a Happineſs indeed: And, when we enjoy the Preſence of a dear Friend, whom we deſired to ſee, in the midſt of our moſt grievous Pains, we are wont to ſay, *Methinks I*

feel no more Pain now that I have the satisfaction of your good Company. Now the Glory of God's Majesty accompanies the Tenderness of his Love. He is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, who comforts us in all our Afflictions. He is like that faithful Friend that never forsakes us: For in our greatest Calamities he succours us, *Prov.* xviii. He is the King of Kings, and yet our most cordial and sincere Friend, who frequently visits the Houses of Sorrow, and is near to every broken and bruised Heart, *Psal.* xxxiv. The more we are oppressed with Evil, the more he remembers us, *Psal.* cxxxvi.

Notwithstanding our Childrens Imperfections and Miscarriages, we cannot bear to see them in Distress, but are moved with Compassion and persuaded to help them according to our Ability: And shall thy God, who loves thee most sincerely, and more cordially, than the best of Fathers, and the most tender-hearted Mothers, do their Children, forsake thee in the Day of Affliction? This merciful and loving Father, who did take thee into his Protection, when thou didst enter into the World, and who since hath furnished plentifully to all thy Necessities; shall he deny his gracious Assistance now in the Time of this thy Calamity? He who hath fulfilled his Praise by thy Mouth, when thou didst suck at thy Mother's Breast, who hath crowned thy youthful Days with his divine Blessings, will not forsake thee now in thine old Age. He will not cast thee off in the last Moments of thy Life, when thy Strength is decayed, and thou art not able to help thyself.

When we offer any Assistance to our sick or wounded Friends, we labour to lessen their Pain; we employ all our Skill, and discover our most excellent Secrets; at least, we endeavour to make them sensible of our Displeasure and Grief for their Distempers, by our Sighs and Tears, and by all good Offices. Their Complaints and Groans are Darts that strike us to the Heart: Likewise our merciful God is sensible of

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our Calamities; when he ſees us oppreſſed with grievous Pains, his Bowels yearn, his Heart is as it were moved, and his tender Love for us is concerned. In all our Afflictions he is afflicted; and whoſoever toucheth us, toucheth the very Apple of his Eye, *Hoſ.* i. *Iſa.* lxiii. He is ſaid to weep and grieve at the Torments that we feel, and to be ſenſible of our Infirmities. He binds up our Wounds, and pours into them his divine Balm, *Luke* ii. He cures the diſeaſed Heart, and cauſeth the bruiſed Bones to rejoice, *Job* v. He caſteth into our Beds of Sickneſs his moſt excellent Perfumes, and drives from thence all Grief and Diſpleaſure. When a peſtilential Fever hath ſeized upon you, this heavenly Phyſician can give you ſome cordial Waters, powerful Antidotes to keep the Poiſon from the Heart, *Jer.* xxx. *Pſ.* cxlvii. li. xxxiv. *Cant.* i. His gracious Hand can drive from the Soul the Venom with which the old Serpent labours to infect it. He will, in thy Need, clap upon thy Head, thy Stomach, or rather to thine Heart, not a bleeding Pigeon, but the living and cheriſhing Virtue of the Holy Spirit. Only diſcover to him the afflicted and diſeaſed Part or Member of thy Soul or Body, and he ſhall anoint it with the Oil of Joy and Gladneſs, that ſhall run down into thy Joints and Marrow. If thou feeleſt thyſelf weak or fainting, ſay to him, as the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, *Comfort my Heart with Wine*, Chap. ii. and he will not fail to preſent unto thee the new Wine of his Kingdom. If thou art thirſty, aſk of him ſome Drink, and he will give thee of that Water, *Which if a Man drink, he ſhall never be athirſt.*

My Brother, or my Siſter, caſt thyſelf upon God; for his Power is as great as his Love to thee. He underſtands, better than thou or we can, what is expedient and good for thee. In his due Time he will make thy Pains to ceaſe, and will pull out of thy Fleſh its incommodious Thorns; either he will drive from thee the Spirit that afflicts thee, or accompliſh his Virtue in

thine Infirmity. He will ſtrengthen thee in ſuch a Manner, and with ſuch Patience, Conſtancy, and Faith, and fill thee with ſo much extraordinary Joy and Comfort, that every one ſhall viſibly perceive, that God himſelf is thy Help, and that his Virtue ſuſtains thee. O how ſweet and pleaſant is God's Aſſiſtance to a Chriſtian Soul! It brings along with it ſo much Pleaſure and admirable Delight; it cauſeth ſuch undeniable Teſtimonies of our Predeſtination to appear; it gives us ſo many rare Foretaſtes of our celeſtial Inheritance, that St. *Paul* prefers it not only to all the Pleaſures and Honours of the World, but alſo to his being raviſhed into the third Heaven, and to his ſeeing unſpeakable Things, which cannot be uttered, 2 *Cor.* xii.

If Afflictions are increaſed with Chriſt, Joy and Comfort increaſe alſo with him: For as God commands Wine to be given to a Man whoſe Heart is oppreſſed with Sorrow, to drive away his Sadneſs, and bury his troubled Thoughts in Oblivion; ſo in the greateſt Evils he ſupplies us with the ſtrongeſt and moſt cordial Conſolations. It is on this Occaſion that he declares his greateſt Power, and pours out moſt plentifully his divine Graces, *Iſa.* ix. Though thou ſhouldeſt walk through the Flames, the Fire ſhall not burn, nor touch thee: For as the Son of God was in the Furnace with *Daniel's* three Companions in *Babylon*, *Dan.* iii. thus in thy moſt violent Fits of the Fever, in the midſt of thy moſt grievous Aches, he will ſatiate thy Soul, and thou ſhalt be like a watered Garden, or as a living Spring of Comfort, that can never be ſtopped or dried up. Let the Storms and Floods beat againſt thee, let the Defluxions endeavour to choak thee, *Iſa.* lviii. thou mayeſt ſay with King *David*, *I have ſet the Lord always before me; becauſe he is at my Right Hand, I ſhall not be moved*, Pſ. xix. Though I ſhould walk in the Valley of the Shadow of Death; though I ſhould have no other Help, nor Aſſiſtance in the World; though no more Strength remains in my

Body, I would not fear; for, *O God, thy Staff and thy Rod will comfort me*, Pſ. xxiii. God will not only draw near to thy Sick-Bed; but he will embrace and receive thee in his Protection, he will kiſs thee with the Kiſſes of his Mouth, and make thee taſte of the Sweetneſs of his divine Comfort, *Cant.* i. He will cheriſh thee as a Mother doth her Child to pacify it, and make thee ſo ſenſible of his Love, that thou mayeſt ſay with the Spouſe, *His left Hand is under my Head, and his Right Hand doth embrace me.* With his gracious Hand he will wipe off that cold Sweat, and into his Boſom he will receive thy Sighs and thy Groans; and thy Tears he will gather up into his moſt precious Bottles. And as when Drops of Blood fell from him, the holy Angels appeared to comfort him, *Luke* xxii. ſo in thy greateſt and moſt difficult Encounters, when thou ſhalt be at Handy-blows with Death itſelf, his faithful Miniſters, his Meſſengers, the Angels of his Right-Hand ſhall viſit thee, to ſupply thee with ſpiritual Comfort, 2 *Cor.* v. *Revel.* v. And when theſe earthly Comforters ſhall fail, he ſhall ſend to thee ſome of thoſe powerful Spirits that wait before his glorious Throne, *Dan.* vii. O good God, if we could but perceive the Things that are of themſelves inviſible, and if thou didſt but give us Eyes, like to thoſe of the holy Prophet, we ſhould perceive Legions of immortal Spirits flying about in the Houſes of Sorrow, with an Intent to aſſiſt the Chriſtian Soul, *Iſa.* vi. 2 *Kings* vi. Finally, as the Sun, with its Light and the Strength of its Beams, drives away the thickeſt Clouds, and comforts with its delightful Countenance the Face of the Earth; ſo Jeſus Chriſt the Sun of Righteouſneſs, who carries Healing under his Wings, baniſheth all Sadneſs with the Light of his divine Grace, *Malach.* iii. and with the Preſence of his Holy Spirit expels away the moſt ſenſible Griefs, and fills us with unſpeakable Joy, and with the Peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a ſick Perſon, who deſires to prepare for Death.

O Almighty and gracious God! the Authour of Light and Darkneſs, and the wiſe Diſpoſer of Good and Evil, I acknowledge and adore thy Hand, that thou haſt laid me upon this Sick-bed, to puniſh me for my Sins. I cannot complain of thy Juſtice, but rather I reverence thy Wiſdom and Goodneſs! for I have deſerved a ſeverer Treatment at thine Hands, having abuſed thy Mercies, and miſ-employed my Strength and Health in purſuing after worldly Vanities and carnal Pleaſures, more earneſtly than after thy Glory, or mine own Salvation; for which Neglect I am heartily ſorry, and repent, and could willingly water this Couch with my Tears. O my God! that knoweſt that this my Grief proceeds from a ſincere Diſpleaſure for having offended ſo gracious a Lord, who now in this Correction diſcovereſt to me thy tender Compaſſion, in that thou rebukeſt me not in thy Wrath; I take this Diſtemper of Body as a Teſtimony of thy paternal Love and Care, ſince this is thine ordinary Method of dealing with thy deareſt Children. I doubt not but it will prove to mine eternal Advantage, in regard thou haſt promiſed, that all Things ſhall work together for Good to them that love thee. *I am willing to ſuffer theſe Pains and Aches, ſo that they may advance thy Glory and my Salvation. I refer myſelf to thy wiſe Diſpoſal; thou knoweſt what is moſt expedient for me; and I am ſenſible of thy Power to reſtore me to Life, and reſcue me out of the Grave. Thy Bleſſing alone is able to give a healing Virtue to all theſe Potions, Medicines, and Receipts adminiſtered to me; but if it be thy Pleaſure to continue this Diſeaſe, continue to me, I beſeech thee, O my Redeemer! the inward Comforts and Aſſiſtance of thine Holy Spirit. Increaſe my Patience, Faith, and Humility, that I may ſubmit to thy ſacred Will. Remove from me all the Grief and Diſpleaſure that renders me uneaſy, and fill my Soul with thy Peace, Joy, and Love; that now being ſepa-*

rated from the Society of Men, I may lift up my Heart and Mind unto thee, my God! and withdraw them from theſe lower Vanities. Grant that I may employ theſe few Moments that thou affordeſt me, to prepare for my Departure, to take a Review of my former ſinful Life, to beg Pardon, and repent, and to truſt upon thine eternal Mercy by a lively Faith, that I may lay hold on thy Salvation, and be able to ſay with David, My Soul ſhall be ſatisfied as with Marrow and Fatneſs, and my Mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful Lips, when I remember thee upon my Bed, and meditate on thee in the Night Watch. *My Sickneſs ſeems tedious, but my Sins have continued longer, and all this bodily Pain and Grief is nothing in Compariſon of the Happineſs that I expect in Heaven. For what are thoſe momentary Sufferings in reſpect of the everlaſting Joys? Grant, I beſeech thee, that this Diſtemper of my Body may turn to the Health and Safety of my Soul, and may oblige me to conſecrate the Reſidue of my Life to thy Service, and to thy Glory; that I may be weaned from the World, and reſign myſelf into thine Hands; that Chriſt may be Gain unto me both in Life and in Death. But if it be thy Will to put a Period to my Sorrows and Sufferings by Death; here I am, O God! ready to obey thy Motion and Will, without the leaſt Reſiſtance or Diſpleaſure: For my troubleſome Abode, undermined by Sickneſs, cauſeth me to wiſh for my Departure. My Soul is willing to forſake this infirm Body; for thou haſt prepared for it a more laſting and a glorious Dwelling above. This Couch, where I am now ſtretched, minds me of the cold Grave where I muſt ſhortly reſt; and this Death that draws nearer and nearer to me, will free me from this Chain of Miſery, put an End to all my Grievances, and lead me out of this rotten Lodge, to introduce me into the glorious Palace of Immortality, where thy divine Majeſty dwells, and where I ſhall for ever glorify thee in the Company of the holy Angels, and ſanctified Souls.* Amen.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a ſick Perſon tormented with violent Pains.

O Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort! Look with an Eye of Pity upon my dreadful and ſharp Sufferings. Thou pierceſt me through with thine Arrows, filleſt my Soul with Bitterneſs; thy Wrath is kindled againſt me, and thou increaſeſt my Sorrows and Pains, both by Night and by Day. Sure, my Sins muſt be extraordinary and heinous, ſince they have provoked thee to deal ſo ſeverely with me, who art Mercy itſelf, art not willing to afflict the Sons of Men. O my God, conſider my Weakneſs and Frailty, and let not thine Almighty Power and the Fierceneſs of thy Wrath be diſplayed againſt ſuch an infirm Creature as I am, a Worm of the Earth, Duſt and Aſhes, Nothing in Compariſon of thee! O infinite Being! Remember that I am related to thee in thy bleſſed Son, and am thine adopted Child; vouchſafe me therefore thy favourable Aſſiſtance, to put an End to my Sorrows and Sufferings, that are ſo exceſſive and extraordinary, that I could willingly ſpeak as Jonas, Death is better to me than Life: *For I am withered like parched Ground in Summer, and a violent Heat conſumes and tortures me. O when wilt thou, my God, who haſt redeemed me from the Torments of Hell, reſcue me out of theſe violent and bodily Pains? I will give a Check to theſe indecent Groanings and Complaints that become not ſuch a ſinful Creature as I am. Thou art in this moſt juſt and righteous; but I muſt cover my Face with Shame and Confuſion: For, were thy Puniſhments far more grievous, were I caſt into everlaſting Flames, I could have no Cauſe to complain of thy Severity, by reaſon of my ſinful Life. O my God! my Sufferings are great, but not to be compared with my Saviour's, when the cold Sweat and Drops of Blood fell down from his precious Body. My grief is violent, but not to be paralleled with the Glory that thou haſt promiſed to thy choſen Servants. O merciful Saviour! thine heavy Hand ſhall never*

hinder

hinder me from truſting and hoping in thee. I am perſuaded that this ſevere Dealing is deſigned for my Good and Salvation; and, in thine own Time, thou wilt take away from me this bitter Cup, that I may not drink up the Dregs: Nevertheleſs, not my Will, but thine be done. With this Affliction, grant me Grace and Strength to bear it patiently, and let thy Puniſhments be proportionable to my Weakneſs; and grant me an happy End and Iſſue, and that neither Death, nor Life, nor Pain, nor Torment, may ever ſeparate me from thy Love, or pluck me out of thine Hand. My good God! forſake me not in my Diſtreſs, but comfort and aſſiſt me, and put an End to this bitter Affliction. I am fainting, and my Soul is weary within me: Vouchſafe to me thy Divine Conſolations, the Cordials of thy Holy Spirit. My Friends and Kindred grieve and weep for mine Affliction, but can give me no Aſſiſtance: Thou art my only Hope, thine Hand alone can relieve and deliver me from mine exceſſive Grief and Sufferings. Quench theſe violent Pains that conſume me, and remove me out of the Reach of Miſery. I cannot but long for Death, that will put a Period to my Torments, releaſe me from mine Affliction, and wipe away all Tears from mine Eyes. O my God! when ſhall my Cryings and Groans be changed into Songs of Praiſe and Thankſgivings? When ſhall I be admitted to the Society of the Bleſſed, who are eſcaped out of all Tribulations, and have waſhed their Garments in the Blood of the Lamb? Draw me, and I ſhall run after thee, and glorify thee for ever in thine heavenly Temple. Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

The Second Consolation against the Fears of Death *is, to look upon* GOD *as a merciful Father, and to trust upon his infinite Goodness.*

THERE is no Child well descended, but desires earnestly to see his Father's Face, and especially the Face of a good and gracious Father. A great Prince's Son, who hath been brought up in a foreign Country, rejoiceth when his Father sends for him, to make him partake of the Glory and Dignity of his Empire. He is not then grieved nor troubled; he seeks not to delay his Departure, but rather embraceth with Transport of Joy, the Messenger of such good News. He thinks of nothing but hastening his Journey: If he could borrow Wings, he would fly with an unspeakable Swiftness to his Father's Palace. Now we are the Children of the great God, whose Throne is Heaven, and whose Footstool is the Earth: For our Faith, that looks upon Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Redeemer, considers God as our God and Parent: For to them, who have received this only Son of the Father, hath been granted the Privilege of being the Sons of God, to them who believe in his Name 1 *John* i. So that we have just Cause to be transported in an holy Excess of Joy, with the Apostle St. *John, Behold, what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God,* 1 John iii.

We are by Nature Children of Wrath, as others; but God, who is rich in Mercy, hath predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good Pleasure of his Will, *Eph.* ii. He gives us the gracious Assurances of this free Adoption in this Life; for as we are Children, he hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts, to cry,

cry, *Abba Father*, Ephes. i. This Holy Spirit bears Witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God. If we be Children, then Heirs of God, and Co-heirs with Christ, *Gal.* iv. Yea, if we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him, *Rom.* viii. That we might be the Children of God, he hath not only adopted us by Jesus Christ, but also regenerated us with incorruptible Seed. We are not born of Flesh and Blood, but we are born of God. His infinite Goodness moved him first to grant us a Being and his incomprehensible Love hath inclined him to reform our Beings, and reprint his divine Image in our Hearts, *John* i. 1 *Pet.* i. He hath begotten us by his pure Grace, by the Word of his Truth, that we might be the First-fruits of his Creatures, *Jam.* i. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us*, 1 Pet. i.

Now though we be the Children of God, and the apparent Heirs of his Crown, our Glory and Dignity is not to be discerned during the Years of our earthly Pilgrimage. Our heavenly Father suffers us here to live in a contemptible State in the Eyes of the World, that we might learn Humility, and long more earnestly for his celestial Inheritance. As it happens in a dark and obscure Midnight, Men tread under Feet Pearls, Diamonds, Sceptres, and Crowns, as Dust and Dung; and now that a gross Ignorance overspreads the World, the Children of God, the most precious Jewels of his Crown, are esteemed no better than the Scum of the Filth of the Earth. This Consideration causeth St. *John* to tell us, *Beloved, we are now Children of God; it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*, 1 John iii. As *David* sent for *Absalom* out of the *Philistines* Country, and gave him Leave to dwell in the City of *Jerusalem*; but for the Space of two

Years

Years he would not suffer him to enter his Royal Palace, or see his Face: Thus God hath freed us from the Devil's Tyranny, and Hell's Power; he hath admitted us into his holy Church, which is as his *Jerusalem*, where he gives us a Foretaste of our heavenly Peace and Reconciliation; but he delays for a Time our Reception into the magnificent Palace of his Glory, and to the Enjoyment of his divine Presence, our highest Satisfaction and greatest Happiness. While we remain in the Body, we are at a Distance from God, so that we are saved, but by Hope, 2 *Cor.* v. But when we shall depart out of this Body, we shall be with the Lord and shall enter into a real Fruition of his celestial Inheritance, *Rom.* viii. Finally, while we dwell here below, we may see the Image of our heavenly Father, and behold his Face as in a Glass; but when he shall admit us near his Throne, we shall see him Face to Face, we shall be transformed into his Likeness, and be fully satisfied with his Resemblance, *Rom.* i. *Cor.* iii. xiii. *Psal.* xvii.

Let Death be ever so frightful and ill-favoured, it is the Messenger of our Heavenly Father; and if we can have the Confidence to open its Iron Hands, and look into them, we shall find gracious Letters, full of Love, by which this Father of Mercy calls us to the full Enjoyment of our eternal Happiness. Death not only invites us to God, but it serves as a Ship to convey us thro' this tempestuous Sea of the World to our Redeemer, who expects our coming at the Haven of everlasting Rest: It is like *Elijah's* Chariot of Fire that carried him up to Heaven, 1 *Kings* ii. If Death covers our Eyes with one Hand, and deprives us of the Light of the Sun, with the other it rends in Pieces that Veil which hinders us from the Sight of those Excellencies of God's immortal Sanctuary, and discovers to us the glorious Face of the Father of Light. With the one it digs for our Bodies a Grave to cast them in, but with the other Hand it flings open for our Souls the Gates of the heavenly *Jerusalem*, to introduce them into the Banqueting-hall.

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Therefore Death ſhould be ſo far from frighting us, that its Arrival ſhould rather comfort us, and cauſe us to reſolve to follow it with an holy Chearfulneſs. For we ſhould not only be willing to go to God with Tranſports of Joy, when he is pleaſed to call us to behold his Face, and to eat of the Bread of eternal Life in his heavenly Kingdom; but of our own Accord we ſhould be impatient to enjoy his glorious Preſence, and in a continual Longing to ſee that happy Day that ſhall bring us to him, and ſatisfy us with unſpeakable Delights. A true Chriſtian ſhould be moved, on this Occaſion, with *David's* Spirit: *As the Hart panteth after the Water Brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee, O God: My Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God: When ſhall I come and appear before God?*

I confeſs that this great God, before whom we are to appear, is clothed with Glory and Majeſty, and dwells in the Light which no Man can approach unto, 1 *Tim.* vi. I know that he ſits upon a dreadful Throne of Fire, whereof the Wheels are like a burning Flame, *Dan.* vii. That thouſand Thouſands wait upon him, and ten thouſand Millions ſtand before him, *Iſa.* vi. I am not ignorant, that at his Preſence the Earth is moved, the Sea and the Rivers dry up, the Mountains tremble, and the little Hills ſhake, the Rocks ſhrink, the Pillars of Heaven fall, and the Seraphims cover themſelves with their Wings, *Rev.* iv. But let not this dreadful Majeſty, and heavenly Pomp, terrify thee, O believing Soul; for this great God is full of fatherly Affection for thee. Round about this Throne of God there is a beautiful Rainbow of a green Colour, like to an Emerald; to ſignify that God is reconciled, and that the Covenant of our Peace is to continue for ever. As out of his magnificent Throne proceed Thunders and Thunder-bolts, that fright the Worldlings, and caſt the proud Souls down to the Ground; ſo from thence proceed alſo Lightnings, and ſuch refreſhing Flames, as are able to comfort the Believer, and to direct him to his celeſtial Inheritance. We are related to God more

than the Angels and Seraphims; for we are not only his Creatures and Servants, but also his Children, and the Members of his Son; nay, we are one with him, *John.* xvii. Let us therefore return our hearty Thanks to our heavenly Father, who hath made us meet to be made Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Life, *Col.* i.

Let us go with Confidence to Mount *Sion*; for there are no Signs of God's Wrath, nor of his just Vengeance, to be seen. We shall find no Boundaries to keep us off from God; but we shall find Assurances of Love to invite and unite us unto him. We shall see no Fire to devour and scare us; but we shall perceive the comfortable Flames, which burn without consuming, and which bring Consolation rather than Fear. We shall not meet there a terrible Lawgiver to drive us from him, to terrify us with his Thunderbolts; but we shall meet a loving Father to embrace and open to us the Bosom of his tender Compassion. In short, we shall not hear there the terrible Sound of the Trumpet, that causeth the Rocks to split asunder, that flings to the Ground the proud Cedars, and makes the Deer cast their Young; but we shall hear the sweet and melodious Voice, that will quiet our trembling Souls, refresh our languishing Spirits, and fill us with Peace and eternal Consolation, *Heb.* xii.

I acknowledge that God is just; but he is also merciful, and his Mercy rejoiceth over Judgement. His Justice is like an exceeding high Mountain; but his Mercy may be compared to the bottomless Deep, *Psalm* xxxix. Therefore *Moses*, who had seen God, more than any living Man, cannot be satisfied to extol and magnify his infinite Mercy, and the overflowing Riches of his Love, *Psalm* xxxix. He names him but once *just*, but many Times he calls him *merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth*, Exod. xxxiv. It is not unworthy of our Observation, that the words *Righteous* or *Just*, attributed to God, often signify also *Merciful, Gracious*,

and *Loving*, in the holy Tongue. It is true, God holds in his Hand the Sword of his Juſtice; but he is girded and clothed with his Mercy, as with a Garment. In ſhort, God is not only good and merciful, but he is alſo Goodneſs and Mercy itſelf, 1 *John* iv. His Compaſſion and Tenderneſs is far greater than that of the beſt Fathers and Mothers, as he himſelf, declares by the Prophet. *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have Compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the Palm of my Hand, yea, in the Bottom of my Heart,* Iſa. xlix. Theſe fatherly Compaſſions force him to let fall the Sword of his Juſtice, as he tells us in *Hoſea, How ſhall I make thee as* Admah? *How ſhall I ſet thee as* Zeboim? *Mine Heart is turned within me, my Repentings are kindled together: I will not execute the Fierceneſs of my Anger,* Chap. xi. Therefore *David* had good Cauſe to be perſuaded, *That though his Father and Mother ſhould forſake him, the Lord would receive him.* If all Love, Kindneſs, and Mercy, were totally baniſhed out of the Earth, and all natural Affection ſhould be extinct, my God will not forſake me while I live, and at the Hour of Death will receive me into his Boſom, and cover me with his Wings. Chriſtian Souls, let not the ſad Remembrance of your former Sins and Miſcarriages diſcourage you. For when we appear before the Throne of God's Majeſty, we muſt not truſt upon our own Righteouſneſs, nor be puffed up with the Fancy of our Merits, but we muſt place all our Aſſurance and Hope in the Mercy of God alone. We muſt imitate *Daniel* who ſpeaks thus of himſelf, and of his Proceedings, *We do not preſent our Supplications before thee for our Righteouſneſs, but for thy great Mercies,* Dan. ix. The Compaſſions of God are our Merits. While God hath Store of Compaſſions, we ſhall not want Merits, St. *Bern.* Now God's Mercies and Compaſſions can never fail; they renew every Morning; his Faithfulneſs is very excellent, *Lam.* iii. *As I live, ſaith the Lord*

God, I have no Pleaſure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Ways, and live, Ezek. xxxiii. *I am he that blots out all thy Sins for my own Sake, and will not remember thy Tranſgreſſions,* Iſa. xlv. Though your Sins and Iniquities appear to you with all the Deformity and Uglineſs of Hell, be not overcome with Grief, nor caſt yourſelves into Deſpair. Let us rather ſay with the Prophet *Jeremiah, Wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man for the Puniſhment of his Sins? Let us ſearch and try our Ways, and turn again unto the Lord. Let us lift up our Hearts with our Hands unto God in the Heavens:* Or let us ſpeak in the Language of *Micah, who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and paſſeth by the Tranſgreſſions of the Remnant of his Heritage? He retaineth not his Anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in Mercy. He will come again, he will have Compaſſion upon us, he will ſubdue our Iniquities, and thou wilt caſt all their Sins into the Depths of the Sea,* Mic. vii. Let us comfort ourſelves with the Words of the Prophet *Daniel, To the Lord our God belong Mercies and Forgiveneſs, though we have rebelled againſt him.*

Tell me not again, I know that God is good and merciful, but my Sins are too many to believe that he will vouchſafe me a Pardon, and have Mercy upon me. And after many repeated Vows, after many Groans, Sighs, and Tears of Repentance, I have returned as a Dog to his Vomit, and as the Swine to wallow in the Mire, 2 *Pet.* ii. But, wretched Sinner, learn for thy Comfort, that if thy Sins ſhould be as many as the Sand by the Sea-ſhore, or as the Stars of the Sky, *Iſa.* xliv. if thou doſt moſt ſincerely repent of them with a contrite Soul, God will blot them out as a Cloud, and will caſt them into the Sea. For God's Mercy has no Bounds, and his Compaſſions are infinite, *Mic.* vii. When thy Brother has offended thee, if he aſk Forgiveneſs, the Lord commands that thou ſhouldſt pardon him, not only ſeven Times, but ſeventy and-ſeven Times, *Mat.* xvii. How much more Reaſon haſt thou to believe, that God, who is Goodneſs and Mercy, will pardon thee more Sins, and

oftener!

oftener! Therefore, inſtead of examining thy Miſcarriages accept of the precious Balm of his divine Conſolations, and ſay with the Royal Prophet, *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name; bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits; who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, and healeth all thy Diſeaſes; who redeemeth thy Life from Deſtruction; who crowneth thee with Loving-kindneſs and tender Mercies; who ſatisfieth thy Mouth with good Things, ſo that thy Youth is renewed like the Eagle's. The Lord executeth Righteouſneſs and Judgement for all that are oppreſſed; the Lord is merciful and gracious, ſlow to Anger, and plenteous in Mercy; he will not always chide, neither will he keep his Anger for ever; he hath not dealt with us after our Sins, nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities; for as the Heaven is high above the Earth, ſo great is his Mercy towards them that fear him; as far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath he removed our Tranſgreſſions from us. Like as a Father pitieth, his Children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him,* Pſal. ciii.

Do not anſwer me, that your Sins are ſo heinous and abominable, that you cannot expect a Pardon: For if they be as high as the proudeſt Mountains, if thou art really ſenſible of their Weight; if they make thee to ſigh and groan, *Lam.* v. God's infinite Mercy, like a Deluge, ſhall cover and waſh them away; or, like a Torrent, it ſhall tranſport them out of thy Sight; for where Sin abounds, God's Grace ſhall ſuperabound, in caſe there be true Repentance, *Iſa.* i. Though your Sins were as Scarlet, they ſhall be as white as Snow; though they ſhould be as red as Vermillion, they ſhall become as white as Wool. All the Offences that you are guilty of, ſince you were in the World, are finite and limited, but God's Mercy is infinite. *O Lord, if thou ſhouldſt mark Iniquities, who ſhall ſtand? But there is Forgiveneſs with thee, that thou mayeſt be feared,* Pſ. cxxx.

He that hides his Tranſgreſſions ſhall not proſper, but he that confeſſes and forſakes them, ſhall obtain Mercy, *Prov.* xviii. It is certain that there is no Sinner ever

ſo guilty, that ſhall ſeek to God's Mercy by a true Repentance, but ſhall obtain his Requeſt, *Pſ.* cxiii. *David* had defiled himſelf with an infamous Adultry, and imbrued his Hands in the Blood of one of his moſt faithful Servants; but as ſoon as he had made Requeſt to God with a broken Heart, and a Contrite Spirit, his good and merciful Creator cleanſed this foul Sinner from all his Guilt, at the Fountain of his infinite Mercy. He made him whiter than Snow, and comforted his bruiſed Bones. This Conſideration cauſed him to cry out, *I ſaid, I will confeſs unto God my Tranſgreſſions; and thou, O God, haſt taken away the Puniſhment of my Sin.* King *Manaſſeh* had been addicted to deviliſh Arts, and to the moſt abominable and heinous Idolatries, 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. Nevertheleſs, as ſoon as he ſighed in his Chains, his Prayers and his Groans found a gracious Reception at the Throne of Grace. The poor Publican in the Goſpel, being aſhamed to lift up his Eyes to Heaven, ſtruck upon his Breaſt with this Expreſſion of his penitent Soul, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*, Luke xviii. And God looked upon him with an Eye of Mercy, and ſtretched out unto him his gracious Hand, ſo that he departed to his Home juſtified. The penitent *Magdalen* was inwardly grieved at her former filthy and debauched Behaviour, ſo that ſhe came and caſt herſelf at our Saviour's Feet, watering them with her Tears, and wiping them with the Hair of her Head, *Luke* ix. But Chriſt ſoon lifted her up with theſe comfortable Words, *Thy Sins are pardoned; thy Faith hath ſaved thee; go in Peace.* St. *Peter*, by Frailty, that ſhould cauſe the beſt Chriſtians to tremble for Fear of falling into the ſame Apoſtaſy, denied his Lord and Maſter three Times, with Curſing and Swearing, *Mat.* xxvi. But this merciful God looked upon him with an Eye of Compaſſion, and gave him Grace to repent moſt bitterly of ſuch a foul Crime. I doubt not, but at the ſame Time that St. *Peter* poured forth his Tears in God's Preſence, he poured into his Heart the Oil of Joy and Gladneſs, and comforted him moſt effectually by his Divine Spirit. Likewiſe, though your Sins be never ſo

grievous

grievous and abominable, if your Souls be touched with Diſpleaſure, if your Hearts be truly penitent, ſo that you ſhed ſincere Tears of Repentance, in caſe you are heartily ſorry for the Want of a ſufficient Grief for your Sins, in caſe you proſtrate yourſelves before your heavenly Father, he will raiſe you up again by his infinite Goodneſs, he will caſt all your Sins and Tranſgreſſions behind him. He will cry unto you inwardly, by the Voice of his Holy Spirit, *My Son*, or *my Daughter, thy Sins are forgiven thee*, John v. He will fill your Souls with an unſpeakable Joy, *Luke* ix. and will cauſe you to ſing with the Pſalmiſt, *Bleſſed is he whoſe Tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe Sin is covered. Bleſſed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth no Iniquity, and in whoſe Spirit there is no Guile*, Pſ. xxxii. Finally, think not that it is ever too late to repent, and, when Death is upon your Lips, that it is no Time to ſeek to the Mercy of God. As the Buſineſs of Repentance cannot be too ſoon, becauſe we know not when God will call us to himſelf, it is moſt certain, that it can never be too late. For at what Time or Seaſon ſoever the poor Sinner melts into Tears of Repentance, in caſe his Repentance be real, and his Tears proceed from a penitent Heart, God will always have the Arms of his Mercy wide open to receive him. The Thief crucified at our Saviour's Side was at the laſt Gaſp when he was converted; and when he uttered this excellent Expreſſion, *Remember me, Lord, when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom*, Luke xxiii. our good and merciful Saviour granted his Requeſt, and encouraged him with the moſt excellent and comfortable Promiſe that could be expected; *Verily I ſay unto thee, To-day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* In like Manner, when thou art at the Point of Death, if God ſpeaks to thee, and awakens thy Conſcience, it is an infallible Sign, that he hath Compaſſion on thee, and that he will not deſtroy thee. It is a Sign, that he opens for thee his Heaven, full of Light and Glory; and offers to thee his Paradiſe, with all its divine Excellencies. Doubt

not, penitent Sinner, but that this is the acceptable Day, the Day of Salvation, and the Time of God's good Pleasure. Since this good God draws so near thee, thou mayest with Freedom draw near him: And since he beats and knocks at the Door of thine Heart, it is an infallible Token, that thou mayest also beat at the Door of his eternal Mercies, and that he intends to open and satisfy thee. In short, at what Hour soever we go to God, and appear before his Throne, he stretched out to us the golden Sceptre of his Favour, that we should obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in Time of Need.

Long and elaborate Speeches and Prayers are needless to persuade God to vouchsafe his Grace and seasonable Help in such an urgent Necessity. It is not necessary that we should compose them with the Arts and Industry of human Wisdom. We need but pray to God, as unto our Father, and weep in his Bosom; we need but open to him our Hearts, and call ourselves his Children. That alone is sufficient to move him to Compassion, and to stir up his fatherly Affections, to appease his Anger, and to draw upon us his most excellent Blessings. The Prophet *Isaiah*, the most eloquent of the Men of his Time, seeks no other Argument to persuade God to have Mercy and Compassion, but this; *Look down from Heaven, and behold from the Habitation of thy Holiness, and of thy Glory: Where is thy Zeal and thy Strength, the Sounding of thy Bowels, and of thy Mercies towards me? Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Israel *acknowledgeth us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy Name is from everlasting*, Isa. xliii. Likewise after he had made this Confession, *We are all as an unclean Thing and all our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags; and we do all fade as a Leaf, and our Iniquities, like the Wind, have taken us away; and there is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy Face from us, and hast consumed us because*

of our Iniquities, Chap. lxiv. he adds, *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are thy Clay, and thou art our Potter, and we all are the Work of thine Hand. Be not wroth very ſore, O Lord, neither remember Iniquity for ever. Behold, ſee, we beſeech thee, we are all thy People.*

By this gracious and loving Title of Father the prodigal Son is perſuaded to be able to oblige his Parent to have Compaſſion on him: *I will ariſe, and go to my Father, and will ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned, againſt Heaven, and againſt thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son; make me as one of thy hired Servants.* Thus, though we have forſaken our heavenly Father, miſ-ſpent the Riches of his Grace, and lived a filthy and profane Life, nevertheleſs, if we can be moved with a ſerious and true Repentance, and ſay to him from our Heart, *Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and againſt thee; I am no more worthy to be called thy Son*; he will forget all the Miſcarriages of our Youth and will paſs by all the Offences that we have committed out of Ignorance or Miſtake; nay, he will blot out all our wilful and deliberate Sins, he will not only embrace us when we ſhall caſt ourſelves at his Feet, and in the Arms of his Mercy, but he will meet and receive us as his deareſt Children. He will kiſs us with the bleſſed Kiſſes of his fatherly Love. He will give to us his Holy Spirit, that ſhall ſeal us for the day of Redemption, and ſhall aſſure us, that we are admitted to the Liberty, and all the Privileges of his Children. He will ſhoe our Feet with the Preparation of the Goſpel of Peace, and will vouchſafe us all the Aſſurance of our intire and perfect Reconciliation. He will clothe us here upon Earth with Robes of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, and in Heaven he will beſtow upon us incorruptible Robes of Immortality and Glory. In this Life he will give us the Foretaſtes of eternal Happineſs, and in the Life to come he will lead us by the Hand into the Banqueting-chamber, and will cauſe us to ſit there at Table with *Abraham, Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and with all the Firſt-born, whoſe Names are written in Heaven. Out of this celeſtial

Abode

Abode all Murmurings and Complaints shall be banished; but there shall be rejoicing and Gladness for the Conversion of poor Sinners, and for their Admittance into the Kingdom of Heaven. God himself shall invite the holy Angels and blessed Spirits to share in these public Rejoicings, saying to them, *We must rejoice; for these my Children were dead, but now they are alive; they were lost, but now they are found again.*

Let the miserable Slaves of the Devil, and of their filthy Lusts, tremble at the Approaches of Death, and let them look upon God as a dreadful Judge, *Rom.* ii. For our Parts, we have not the Spirit of Bondage to be again in Fear; but we have the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father.* Let the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*, who have no other Being in Life, but that which they have received with their corrupt Nature, fly from God's Presence: For our Parts, we that are regenerated by the Spirit of the second *Adam*, will draw near to him with Boldness. We will not say as *Adam*, disturbed and frighted at the Consideration of his Crime, *I heard thy Voice; I was afraid, and hid myself*, Gen. iii. but rather, having been brought up in the Schools of the Prophets and Apostles; and having learned that we must prefer our Obedience to God's Will, to all other Things whatsoever; we shall say to him with *Samuel, Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth*, 1 Sam. iii. Or rather, we will address ourselves to him in plainer Terms; O my God, and heavenly Father, speak when thou wilt; for thy Servant is ready, and resolved to obey thy Command. We will not stay till God shall call the fourth Time, as that holy Man, 1 *Sam.* iii. who, because of his tender and unexperienced Years, could not distinguish between God's Voice and that of Man, but we will have our Ears always open to his Divine Orders, and at the first Motion and Summons of his Will we shall be ready to follow him, as the Children of *Israel* were in the Wilderness, when they raised their Camp, and marched at his Motion, *Numb.* iii.

And

And as when the *Levites* ſtopped, and put down the Ark in its Place, 2 *Chron.* iii. *Moſes* uttered this Prayer, *O Lord, give Reſt to the Thouſands of* Iſrael; likewiſe you, believing Soul, whom God hath choſen for his Ark and Temple, as ſoon as you ſhall perceive the leaſt ſign of Death, ſpeak with an holy Confidence and Joy: Rejoice, O my Soul; the Time of thy Freedom, and of thine eternal Reſt, approacheth. Here is the Meſſenger of good News, here is Death, that will uſher me into the glorious Palace of my Heavenly Father. *Father, the Hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee,* John xvii.

When the Hour was come that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was to get out of the World to the Father; he ſaid to his Diſciples who were grieved for his Departure from them, *If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, becauſe I ſaid, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I,* John xiii and xiv. Chriſtian Souls, ſpeak in this Manner at the Hour of your Departing. If ſuch as are about you happen to weep and lament, if they endeavour to move and ſtop you, by the Conſideration of Fleſh and Blood, ſay unto them, Why are you grieved at my Deliverance, and at the End of my Miſery? Why ſhould you hinder and retard my Glory and Happineſs? O how cruel is your Love! How blind and inconſiderate is your Affection! Certainly, if ye did love me as ye ought, ye would prefer my Satisfaction, and the Accompliſhment of my Happineſs, to the ſmall Advantage that ye gather from my Abode with you. Ye ſhould conſider, that the leaſt Part of the Joy that I ſhall feel in my heavenly Father's Houſe is a thouſand Times more worth than all the Pleaſure of the Earth, than the Honours of the Age, and the Pomp and Glory of the World. My Friends, or rather my Enemies, let me go; for I go to my Father; I go to behold his Face, which is the moſt divine Satisfaction; I go to take Poſſeſſion of an Inheritance prepared for me from the Foundations of the World, *John* xx. *Matth.* xxi.

A ſhort

A ſhort Prayer and Meditation for a Chriſtian, who prepares himſelf for Death, by relying on the Mercy of God the Father.

MY God and Creator, I perceive, by the Symptoms of Death, that my Departure is at hand, and I am ſummoned to appear before thy dreadful Tribunal! The Remembrance of my former heinous Sins cannot but terrify me, when I view myſelf, Duſt and Aſhes, and thine infinite Being, and Divine Perfections: When I compare my Wickedneſs and Guilt with thy ſuperlative Excellence and Holineſs; how can I, who am but as Straw and Stubble, ſtand before a conſuming Fire? If I ſhould ſee thee, O my God! upon thy glorious Throne, ſurrounded with Millions of immortal Spirits, armed with Thunderbolts, and encompaſſed with Flames of Fire, and thoſe of Mount Sinai, *I ſhould not only tremble for Fear, but fall into Deſpair, and fly from thee, as my firſt Parents, or, as* Moſes *and* Iſaiah, *be diſmayed, and deplore my unclean Nature, not fit to draw near to ſo holy a God. But, O merciful Father! thy glorious Preſence is not without ſome Tokens of Mercy. I ſee a Rainbow round about thy Throne, an Aſſurance of my Peace and Reconciliation. I dare therefore draw near the Throne of thy Grace, from whence thou reacheſt to me the Sceptre of thy infinite Goodneſs, and ſpeakeſt to me in a Language full of Love and Compaſſion to comfort me, to revive my drooping Spirits, and fill me full of Hope and Confidence of my future Happineſs and Salvation. Since, therefore, I ſee about thee, O my God! no ſuch terrible Mark of thy Wrath, I will no longer yield to the Spirit of Bondage, that inclines to Fear; but will be perſuaded by the Spirit of Adoption, to cry unto thee, Abba, Father. For I am thy Child and Coheir with thy bleſſed Son, who hath reconciled me to thee by the Blood of his Croſs, when I ſtood as an Enemy at a Diſtance.*

Diſtance. But now that I am ſo nearly related to thee, wilt thou deny me mine Inheritance, purchaſed for me by Chriſt? O heavenly Father! I know mine Offences are heinous; and if thou didſt treat me with Severity and Juſtice, I could expect nothing but the eternal Flames. Yet I am aſſured, that thou doſt not delight in the Death of Sinners, and haſt promiſed to accept my penitential Tears and Amendment. And though my Sins be many and grievous; O let thy Grace and Mercy be magnified in the Pardon of them. I am perſuaded that thy Compaſſion will receive and embrace me, as a Father his afflicted Child, and put far from thee mine Offences. Return then unto thy Reſt, O my Soul! for the Lord is gracious unto thee, and is ready to admit thee into his eternal Kingdom. I underſtand therefore Death's Summons to be the Voice of my Lord and Father, who calls and commands me to come unto him. I will follow the Example of the Prodigal Son, and ſpeak in his Language; Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and againſt thee; and am no more worthy to be called thy Son. *I confeſs, O my God! that thou haſt not been ſparing of thy manifold Bleſſings to me; but I have not employed them as I ought, to thy Honour and Glory. The Temptations of the World have too much prevailed upon me, and my wicked Inclinations have drawn me away from thy Service, to gratify the Corruption of my Nature. In this ſinful State that I am in, I fly to thee for Mercy and Pardon. Have Compaſſion on me, my heavenly Father, whoſe Tenderneſs for me far exceeds that of the moſt tender-hearted Parents. I am fully perſuaded, that thou wilt not reject me; but art ready to embrace and meet me on the Way, as the Father of the prodigal Son. O unparalleled Love! O infinite Goodneſs and Condeſcenſion! I am confident to find it in thee, my God, and to be a Partaker of it! I doubt not, but that thou wilt quiet my troubled Spirit with a gracious Reception, clothe me with the Robe of thy Righteouſneſs, and entertain me in thy glorious Palace, where I ſhall be admited to ſolemnize the Marriage of the Lamb, deſigned as an Offering from*

the

the Foundation of the World, in the happy Society of Angels, and immortal Spirits, where we ſhall glorify thee and be everlaſting Monuments of thine infinite Goodneſs and Mercy. O admirable Wiſdom, in diſpoſing of thine Elect! We were loſt Creatures; but we ſhall be found in God. We were dead in our Sins; but by Death, which we had drawn upon ourſelves, we ſhall return to Life. We are caſt into the moſt horrible State; but thereby we ſhall attain and be advanced to the higheſt Felicity. O my God! I recommend unto thee my Soul as to a faithful Creator: Heavenly Father, into thy Hands I commit my Spirit. Amen.

CHAP. XV.

The Third Conſolation againſt the Fears of Death *is, to meditate continually on the Death and Sufferings of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to truſt upon the Merits of his Croſs.*

IF we deſire to die with a peaceable and quiet Mind, we muſt always meditate upon the Death and Sufferings of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and reſt upon the Merits of his Croſs. For the Death of this Prince of Life is the Model of ours, and the Fountain of Comforts and Joys of a believing Soul.

1. By looking upon this perfect Example, the Wonder of Men and Angels, we learn to endure with an holy Reſolution and Patience, all the Evils and Pains that attend upon Death. For though our Saviour's Torments were exceſſive, ſo that his Soul was *ſorrowful unto Death*; though there iſſued out of his innocent Body a bloody Sweat, from the Violence of his Grief, *Luke* xxii. yet out of his Mouth came not forth the leaſt Sign of Repining or Impatience, *Iſa.* iii. He was led to the Slaughter as a Lamb, and as a Sheep before the Shearers is dumb.

2. From

2. From hence we learn, that the laſt Hours of our Life, muſt be employed in fervent and continual Prayers to God, ſince this Beloved of our Father offers to him at ſuch a Time his Prayers and Supplications, with ſtrong Crying, and a Flood of Tears, as to him who was able to deliver him from Death, *Heb.* v. In the Boſom of this heavenly Father he poureth out all his Grief; and three Times he preſents his Requeſt, *Father, if this Cup may not paſs away from me, except I drink it*, &c.

3. We learn alſo to preſent ourſelves before God's Divine Majeſty with Humility, and to reſign ourſelves wholly to his adorable Providence: He who thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, he whom the Millions of Angels and Seraphims worſhip continually, judged it no Diſgrace to himſelf to fall upon his Knees three Times to the Ground, and ſubmit his Will to that of his heavenly Father. For after that he had ſaid, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs away from me:* He adds theſe Words, *Nevertheleſs, O Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt*, Mat. xxvi.

4. If, at the Time of our Death, an exceſſive Sorrow, or a malignant Humour, ſeize upon our Minds, and hinder us from ſeeing the Heavens open, or God, who ſtretcheth out his Arms to receive us into his Reſt; let us remember, that this merciful Lord ſpeaks to us, as he did to his three Apoſtles, who ſlept when he was in his Agony, *Cannot ye watch one Hour with me?* Mat. xxvi. My dear Children, it is not Time to fall aſleep with the fooliſh Virgins; trim your Lamps, put on the Garments of Light, to meet your celeſtial Bridegroom, and to enter with him into the Marriage-chamber, *Mat.* xxv.

5. God requires that we ſhould do as much Good at all Times to our Friends as we are able, and to expreſs the Sincerity of our Affections to thoſe to whom Nature and Religion have cauſed us to be related. But chiefly at the Hour of Death we are more bound to this religious Duty. Therefore Jeſus Chriſt hath

ſhewn

ſhewn us an excellent Example; for when he was nailed on the Croſs, and ready to breathe forth his Soul into the Hands of his heavenly Father, he took care of his holy and bleſſed Mother, ſaying to his beloved Diſciple, *My Son, behold thy Mother*; and to her, *Woman, behold thy Son.*

6. We ought to do Good, and ſhew Kindneſs, not only to our Friends, but alſo forgive our greateſt Enemies, ſuch as are the moſt enraged againſt us. For by this means we ſhall follow the bleſſed Footſteps of our gracious Saviour; for he had Compaſſion upon them that crucified him, and mocked him. *Father*, ſaid he, *forgive them*; *for they know not what they do.*

7. By the Croſs of Jeſus Chriſt, we learn to put our Truſt in the Goodneſs of God in our ſharpeſt Pains, and to embrace him as our moſt loving Father and Redeemer, at that Inſtant, when he ſeems to diſcover to us a ſevere Countenance, full of Wrath. For this, eternal Son of God, in his moſt violent Tortures, when his heavenly Father withdrew from him his Aid and Aſſiſtance, and with-held the Effects of his Grace, the Expreſſions of his Love, and the Comfort of his divine Spirit; yet he looked upon him as his God, and prays to him with an holy Aſſurance, repeating theſe Words, *My God! My God!*

8. If we will die willingly, and leave theſe infirm Bodies with a joyful Mind, when the Time is come, that we muſt go to the Father of Spirits, we ought to remember with what Reſolution our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt prepared himſelf for Death, and how willingly he commended his innocent Soul into the Hands of God his Father, when he required it. *No Man taketh my Life away from me, but I lay it down of myſelf*; *I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again*; *this Commandment have I received of my Father*, John x. Heb. x. This cauſed him to ſpeak in this Manner, *Here I am, O God, to do thy Will*, Luke. xxiii. Therefore, when he gave up the Ghoſt, he cryed with a loud Voice, to ſhew that his precious Soul was not taken from

from him by Violence; but that he willingly offered it up as a Sacrifice to God.

9. In this excellent Deſcription of Chriſt crucified, we may farther learn, what ſhould, be our laſt Words, and our laſt Thoughts. For if God grants us the Uſe of our Tongues until the laſt Moment, we cannot end our Life more comfortably, than by ſuch Expreſſions as our Saviour made uſe of upon the Croſs, *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit.* But if we cannot move our Lips, nor pronounce theſe Words, we ought to have them inwardly in our Minds, and expreſs them with the Motions of the Heart.

10. In looking exactly into the Death and Paſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we may eaſily find how much we are engaged to yield up our Souls to God, when he is pleaſed to call for them. For his bleſſed Death is the Price and Ranſom that he hath paid for them. Now, if it be reaſonable to render unto every one that which he hath bought and purchaſed with a great Price, and if it would be a great Injuſtice to refuſe to any Man that which he hath paid for with the Blood of his only and beloved Son, how can we refuſe our Souls unto God, ſince they belong to him? Becauſe he hath not only created them, and ſtamped in them his Image, but hath alſo purchaſed them with the Blood of his only Son, in whom, from all Eternity, he is well pleaſed. We muſt not therefore imitate the Example of ill Paymaſters; or unjuſt Poſſeſſors of other Men's Goods; we muſt not expect, until our Souls be plucked from us by Violence, but rather, like the good and righteous Debtors, we ought to return them willingly, and yield them up into his Hands, who hath paid for them an infinite and invaluable Ranſom. *David* was of this Mind when he ſaid, *Into thy Hand I commit my Spirit; thou haſt redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth,* Pſal. xxxi.

11. From this Death and Paſſion of our glorious Redeemer, we underſtand not only our Duty, but alſo find ſufficient Grounds of Comfort and Hope; and ſuffer me

to ſay, it is in the Bowels of this dead Lion, that we meet with the ſweeteſt and moſt raviſhing Conſolations. This Chief Prieſt, who bears us upon his Breaſt in his heavenly Sanctuary, or rather in his Heart, will not forſake us in the Day of our Diſtreſs, nor yield us up to the Fears and Pangs of Death. For ſince he hath encountered with this cruel Enemy, ſince he hath felt its Stings, its Shiverings, and Pains, and hath been tempted, as we have been, in all Things, Sin excepted; he is merciful and faithful to have Compaſſion on our Infirmities; he is no leſs able to aſſiſt us in our Temptations, and to make us in all Things more than Conquerors.

12. Believing Souls, conſider with me the noble Expreſſions of St. *Paul: Bleſſed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, who comforteth us in all our Tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any Trouble, by the Comfort wherewith we ourſelves are comforted of God*, 2 Cor. i. Theſe excellent Truths may be very well applied to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whom the Holy Ghoſt names the *Apoſtle and High-Prieſt of our Profeſſion*, Heb. iii. For the comfortable Aſſiſtances which he hath received from God, in the Time of his greateſt Anguiſh, are precious Tokens and infallible Aſſurances of God's future Help in our Need. For as when he was in his bitter Agony, when his Soul was caſt down with a deadly Sorrow, an Angel from Heaven came to comfort him; ſo likewiſe, when we ſhall be engaged in an Encounter with Death, when it ſhall endeavour to fill our Souls with Sadneſs and Apprehenſions; he will, doubtleſs, ſend to us ſome of his good Angels, that be at his Right Hand, I mean the faithful Teachers of his Holy Word; or elſe he will ſend from Heaven ſome of his bleſſed Spirits that ſtand about his Throne, who are commonly employed in the Aſſiſtance of the Faithful. The Holy Ghoſt himſelf, the Comforter of afflicted Souls, and the true Oil of Gladneſs, will then drive from our Hearts

Hearts all Grief, and revive us with his heavenly Comforts. He will not forſake us, till he has brought us to the Head-ſpring of eternal Joy and Comfort.

13. Our Lord and Saviour's Deliverance from Death, is in ſome Reſpect, an Image and Aſſurance of our future Deliverance, which we are to expect from God's Mercy and Almighty Power. For as when St. *Paul* ſaith, That this High-Prieſt, in the Days of the Fleſh, offered up Prayers and Supplications with ſtrong Crying and Tears to him that was able to ſave him from Death, *and was heard in that he feared*; we are not to underſtand, that he was altogether freed from Death, but rather, that he had the Favour granted to him of ſwallowing up Death in Victory, and of triumphing over the Powers of Hell; and that thro' the Shame and Bitterneſs of Death he is entered into his Glory, and into the Joys of his heavenly Paradiſe: Likewiſe when we pray to God in our greateſt Diſtreſſes and deepeſt Sorrow, when we pour into his Boſom the Tears of a ſincere Repentance, he hears us from his Sanctuary, and delivers us from Death; not by hindering us from dying, but by conveying our Souls through Death into an immortal Life; from Suffering, into Happineſs.

14. To be fully perſuaded that God will not withhold from us the Joys and Comforts of his Holy Spirit; and that he will make us more than Conquerors of Death, by admitting us into an eternal Felicity; we need but caſt our Eyes upon this Great God and Saviour: For as he who grants a great deal, will not refuſe a little; ſo God, who has not ſpared his only Son, but hath delivered him for us all, to an ignominious and cruel Death, how ſhall not he with him freely give us all Things? St. *Paul* hath taught us to argue in this Manner, and to gather this neceſſary Conſequence of God's Proceedings, *Rom.* viii.

15. When Chriſt our Lord gave up the Ghoſt upon the Croſs, the Veil of the Temple was rent from the Top to the Bottom, Heaven was opened, and a re-

penting Thief was admitted. All this was to teach us, that we may enter into the Holy of Holies, by the Blood of Jeſus, by the new and living Way, which he hath conſecrated; by the Veil, that is, his Fleſh; that this merciful Lord hath always his Arms wide open to receive us; and that he will never refuſe the Glory of Heaven, and the Delights of his Paradiſe, to the greateſt Sinners, who, repenting have Recourſe to him by his eternal Mercy and infinite Merits.

16. The Death of this great God and Saviour is the Payment of all our Debts, and the Expiation of all our Crimes: It is the Healing of all our Diſeaſes, the Freedom of all our Miſeries; for it hath overcome Satan and the Powers of Hell: It is the Death of an eternal Death, the meritorious Death that hath purchaſed for us Heaven, and all its Excellencies; and procured to us a Right to God's Paradiſe, and to its Delights and Pleaſures: In ſhort, it is this Death that introduces Paradiſe into our Souls before we enter into Paradiſe, and fills our Minds with an heavenly and divine Peace, and an unſpeakable and glorious Joy.

17. This Croſs of our Saviour may be compared to the Wood, which *Moſes* caſt into the Waters of *Marah*. For it takes away from the natural Death of God's Children whatſoever is incommodious and bitter, and cauſeth us to reliſh Sweetneſs and Comforts that cannot be expreſſed. It is like the Salt which the Prophet *Eliſha* caſt into the Waters of *Jericho*, to make them wholſome and fruitful: For it cauſeth, that Death itſelf proves our Salvation, and brings to us unſpeakable Comforts. I may alſo liken it to the Meal which the ſame Prophet caſt into the Pot, of which the Sons of the Prophets had made this Complaint, *O thou Man of God, there is Death in the Pot!* It is the Death of Death, becauſe it removes from it all deadly Poiſon, and cauſeth us to reliſh angelical Satisfactions. I may therefore ſay of this glorious Croſs, That it is the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*; becauſe it makes known and underſtood the dreadful Evils from which we

we are delivered, and the infinite Advantages which are procured to us by Chriſt's Death. I may call it alſo the *Tree of Life*; for every one that gathers of the Fruit of this Tree with the Hand of Faith, and eats of it, ſhall live for ever, *John* vi. Believing Souls, it is that myſtical Ladder which *Jacob* ſaw in a Viſion; for it unites Heaven and Earth, ſinful Man with his God, *Gen.* xxviii. It pleaſed the Father to make Peace by the Blood of his Son crucified, and to reconcile all Things to himſelf, whether they be Things on Earth, or Things in Heaven, *Col.* i. It is by the Means of this Bleſſed Croſs, that the good Angels are ſent to our Aſſiſtance, and that all the Graces and Bleſſings of God are procured to us. By this Croſs we ſhall aſcend up to God, and to his eternal Happineſs. Under the Shadow of this divine Croſs our Souls reſt, and enjoy the Peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding. It is like the golden Sceptre which King *Ahaſuerus* ſtretched out unto *Eſther*. For if we touch this precious Croſs with the Hand of Faith, if we embrace it with a contrite Soul, we ſhall obtain from the King of Kings, not only the half Part, but all his Kingdom, with all its Delights, Honours, and Advantages.

18. *Moſes's* Rod was changed into a Serpent, and ſo were the Rods of *Pharaoh's* Magicians, but his Serpent devoured all the reſt. Thus the Death of the Lord and Saviour is accompanied with Sorrow, Fear, and Anguiſh; but theſe Fears ſwallow up all other Fears, and cauſe us to draw near with Confidence to the Throne of Grace. His Sorrows drive away all our Griefs, and fill us with Joy and eternal Comfort. His Anguiſh gives Eaſe and Satisfaction to our Souls. His troubled Mind is the Cauſe of the Settlement of our Conſciences. His Drops of Blood waſh away our Tears. His Groans hinder us from ſighing, and his ſtrong Crying cauſes us to ſing with Joy. The Fetters of this glorious Redeemer have purchaſed our Freedom; and his Condemnation our Abſolution. He hath been content to drink Vinegar mingled with Gall, and to ſwallow the very Dregs of

the Cup of God's Wrath and Juſtice, that he might cauſe us to drink of the Rivers of his divine Pleaſure. He cried out in the Violence of his Grief, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Matth. xxvii. That God might never forſake us, and that in our greateſt Troubles we might have always his fatherly and powerful Aſſiſtance ready at Hand, he ſtooped down his Head to raiſe our Hopes. In ſhort, he died, that he might deliver them, who, through Fear of Death, were all their Life-time ſubject to a cruel and unſufferable Bondage, *Heb.* ii. So that all ſuch as tremble, and are afraid, at the Approaches of Death, have not yet felt the Power and Efficacy of the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus. They trample under Foot the Blood of the Son of God, and, as much as in them lies, they render the Fruits and Efficacy of his bleſſed Death of no Effect.

19. Conſider well, Chriſtian Souls, and imprint into your Minds this Leſſon: Remember that Death is never to be feared, but when it is attended with God's Wrath, and the Curſe of his Law; when our Sins and Offences have ſupplied it with offenſive Weapons; when the Devil, who ſeeks to devour us as a roaring Lion, follows Death at the Heels; and when at the ſame Time Hell opens its infernal Jaws to ſwallow us up. But thoſe who have placed their Faith and Hope in the Death and Paſſion of the Saviour of the World, and who embrace his Croſs, are exempted from all its Fears, and out of the Reach of all its poiſonous Darts.

20. My beloved Souls, be not therefore frighted to ſee the Face of the great Judge of the World, 1 *Tim.* ii. becauſe we have ſuch an excellent Mediator between God and Man, namely, the Man *Chriſt Jeſus*, who hath given himſelf a Ranſom for all, *Rom.* iii. He hath diſarmed God's eternal Juſtice, and ſtopped the Proceedings of his Vengeance. For God hath appointed him from all Eternity to be a Propitiation, by Faith in his Blood, *John* v. The Father judges no

no Man, but hath given all Judgement to the Son, as he is the Son of Man. There is now no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus: Whoſoever believes in him, ſhall never come into Condemnation, but is paſſed from Death to Life, *Rom.* viii. *John* v.

21. Fear no more the Thunderbolts and the Flaſhes of Fire of Mount *Sinai*; neither tremble when you hear its terrible Thunder: *Curſed is every one who continues not in all Things written in the Book of the Law to do them*, Deut. xxviii. For though Chriſt's Hands were nailed and faſtened to the Wood, they plucked out of the Hands of God's Juſtice his terrible Thunderbolts, and the Sword of his Vengeance. The precious Blood that runs down from the Wounds of this divine Redeemer, quenches the ſcorching Heat of his conſuming Fire and Flames. As at the Time of our Saviour's Paſſion he had a Care of his Diſciples, and therefore he deſired thoſe that came to take him, *If you ſeek me, let theſe go*, John xviii. likewiſe he hath now a Care of all ſuch as believe in his Name, to ſecure them under the Shadow of his Croſs. He takes their Place, and for them he ſtands before God's Juſtice, ſaying, Since you have taken me to be their Pledge, and have purſued me without Mercy; and ſince I have ſufficiently ſatisfied for their Crimes, and have taſted for them the moſt bitter and cruel Death; ſuffer them to enjoy the Freedom that hath been purchaſed at ſuch a dear Rate. Suffer them to paſs through Death into the Enjoyment of a bleſſed Life, which is the Price of my Blood, and the Fruit of my Victories. This merciful Redeemer hath put himſelf, of his own Accord, in our Stead; and hath endured in his own Perſon, all the Pains which were due to our Sins. He hath been ſtruck with *Moſes's* Rod, and pierced through with the Darts of the Law; he hath been made a Curſe for us; for it is written, *Curſed is every one that hangeth upon a Tree*, Gal. v. But we are not only by this means redeemed from the Curſe of the Law, but we are alſo bleſſed in him, with all Man-

ner of heavenly Bleſſings. When we were without Chriſt, we were Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, having no Hope, and without God in the World. But we, who were far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Chriſt; we have Acceſs with Confidence by Faith in his precious Blood; ſo that we may go with Boldneſs to the Throne of Grace, to find Mercy and Help in Time of Need, *Heb.* iv. Rejoice, therefore, Chriſtian Souls; for you are not come to the Mount that might not be touched with Hands, nor to a burning Fire, nor unto Blackneſs, and Darkneſs, and Tempeſt, and the Sound of a Trumpet, and the Voice of Words, which Voice they that heard, intreated, that the Word ſhould not be ſpoken to them any more; but ye are come unto Mount *Sion*, and to the City of the living God, the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and to an innumerable Company of Angels; to the general Aſſembly and Church of the Firſt-born, which are written in Heaven; and to God the Judge of all; and to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect; and to Jeſus the Mediator of the new Covenant; and to the Blood of Sprinkling, that ſpeaketh better Things than that of *Abel:* For *Abel's* Blood called for Vengeance againſt his Brother, *Heb.* xii. *Col.* i. but the Blood of Chriſt pleads for Mercy, Pardon, and Forgiveneſs, for them who were his Enemies in their Underſtandings, and wicked Deeds. And if, when we were Enemies, we have been reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, *Rom.* v. how much more now, that we are reconciled, ſhall we be ſaved by his Life and Interceſſion!

22. Never fear the Devil, nor all the Powers of Hell; for, according to God's ancient Promiſe, *the Seed of the Woman ſhall bruiſe the Serpent's Head*, Gen. iii. The Lord of Glory hath ſpoiled the Principalities and Powers; he hath made a Shew of them, openly triumphing over them on his Croſs, *Col.* ii. By his Death he hath deſtroyed him who had the Empire of Death, that is the Devil; ſo that he hath cruſhed to Pieces this red Dragon that devoured whole Nations

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and People, *Heb.* ii. *Rev.* xii. As it happened when the Children of *Iſrael* looked up to the brazen Serpent ſet up by *Moſes* in the Wilderneſs, they were perfectly cured of the Bitings of the fiery Serpents: Thus, wretched Sinners, who feel the venomous and deadly Wounds of the old Serpent, caſt the Eyes of your Faith upon Jeſus Chriſt crucified, and you ſhall be ſaved from Death, *John* iii. As when the Angel deſtroyed the Firſt-born of *Egypt*, he had not the Power to meddle with the Children of *Iſrael*, who had ſprinkled their Doors with the Blood of the Paſchal Lamb; ſo the Devil, who deſtroys the Children of this World, hath not Power to touch thoſe whoſe Hearts and Conſciences are waſhed in the Blood of this ſpotleſs Lamb. And as *Pharaoh*, and all the *Egyptians* that followed him, were overwhelmed and drowned in the Waters of the *Red Sea*, *Heb.* x. which ſerved as a Paſſage to the Children of *Iſrael* to their promiſed Land: Thus *Satan*, and all his wicked Spirits are, as it were, ſwallowed up in the precious Sea of Chriſt's Blood, which opens to us a Way to the celeſtial *Canaan*. Rejoice, ye Heavens, and you that dwell in them; for the Accuſer of your Brethren is caſt out, who accuſed them Day and Night before God; but they have overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb, 1 *Pet.* i. *Jam.* iv. Chriſtian Souls, reſiſt the Devil, and he will fly from you. If he goes about as a roaring Lion, ſeeking whom he may devour, be not troubled at his Fury, nor at his infernal Power; for he is tied to a Chain that he cannot ſtretch nor break; he hath been overcome by the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*. Take therefore the Shield of Faith, that you may be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil, *Rev.* vi. and to ſpeak to him with an undaunted Spirit, get thee behind me *Satan*, for thou haſt no Part in me; I belong to the Lord Jeſus, who hath paid my Ranſom, who hath redeemed me with his Blood, and ſealed me with his Spirit. The Gates of Hell have no Power upon thoſe who are built upon the Rock of Eternity, *Mat.* xvi.

23. Let

23. Let not your Sins caſt you into the Abyſs of Deſpair, nor drive you from the Anchor of your Hope. For God hath ſo loved the World, that he hath given his only Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life. They that are whole have no need of a Phyſician, but they that are ſick, *John* iii. Our Saviour is not come to call the Juſt to Repentance; ſuch as are puffed up with a vain Conceit of their own Righteouſneſs; but Sinners, who acknowledge their Faults, and are ſorry for them. The ſacred Arms of our Redeemer, that were ſtretched wide open upon the Croſs, are yet ſtretched wide open to receive us; and from the higheſt Heavens where he dwells he cauſeth theſe comfortable Words to be heard, *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Reſt*, Matt. xi. This merciful Lord is come to ſeek the loſt Sheep, to ſave ſuch as were periſhed, and to redeem his People from their Sins. As by one Man Sin came into the World, and by Sin Death; thus Death is come upon all Men, for they have all ſinned; likewiſe, by the Obedience of one, we are become Conquerors over Death, *Rom.* v. and we have obtained the Gift of Righteouſneſs and Immortality: It is the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World, who hath made an Atonement for all our Iniquities, *John* i. For as the Ram that was caught by the Horns in a Thicket, was offered up to God as a Burnr-offering inſtead of *Iſaac*, *Eph.* v. thus the true Lamb of God hath been offered up unto God upon the Croſs for us, as a Burnt-ſacrifice well-pleaſing unto him. He hath borne our Iniquities in his Body upon the Tree, and by his Stripes we are healed, *Iſa.* liii. He hath borne our Griefs, and carried our Sorrows; the Chaſtiſement of our Peace was upon him. As *Aaron* put upon the live Goat *Hazael* all the Sins of the People, *Lev.* xvi. God hath made him who knew no Sin, to be made Sin for us, that we might become the Righteouſneſs of God in him, 2 *Cor.* v. *Acts* x. Whoſoever believes in him ſhall receive Remiſſion of Sins

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in his Name. Therefore, rather than run into Deſpair, as *Cain*, *Achitophel*, and *Judas*, let us cry out with King *David*, *O bleſſed is the Man whoſe Tranſgreſſion is forgiven, and whoſe Sin is covered! O bleſſed is he unto whom the Lord imputeth no Sin!* Pſal. xxxi. Or let us burſt out into St. *Paul's* Language, *Who ſhall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that juſtifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, Rom.* viii. Let us therefore embrace this crucified Jeſus, and ſay with the Bleſſed Virgin, *My Soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*; or, with the glorified Spirits in Heaven, *To him that hath loved us, and waſhed us from our Sins in his Blood, be Glory and Strength for ever and ever.* Amen.

24. Chriſtian Souls, if the vaſt Number of your Sins come into your Remembrance, conſider that it is not ſaid, that the Blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us only from a certain Number of Sins, but, *that if we confeſs our Sins, He is faithful and juſt*, that is, true and merciful, *to forgive us our Sins*; *and that the Blood of* Jeſus Chriſt *cleanſeth us from all Sins.* Let them be never ſo numerous, drown them all, as ſo many helliſh Monſters, in the Blood of thy Saviour. Take hold of this divine Jeſus, with the Arms of Faith and Repentance. Wrap yourſelves up in his Winding-ſheet; repoſe yourſelves upon his Croſs, and reſt ſecure in the Shadow of his Almighty Interceſſion.

25. But if the Heinouſneſs of your Crimes fright you, take hold at the ſame Time of the Horns of this myſtical Altar, and all the Powers of Hell will not be able to pluck you thence. Comfort thyſelf, ſinful Soul; for there cannot be a Spot ſo black, or ſo deep, but the Blood of Chriſt is able to waſh it clean away. There is no Crime ſo abominable, but the Sacrifice of this Lamb without Spot, that taketh away the Sins of the World, can make an Atonement for it. Let thy Sins be never ſo great, they have their Limits; but thy Redeemer's Merits are without Limits, and the Efficacy

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of his Sufferings continues for ever. To aſſure thee of this Truth, and to encourage thee, he was pleaſed upon the Croſs to diſcover the Riches of his Mercy upon a wretched Robber, who ſuffered then by the Hand of Juſtice for his Crimes. As ſoon as he ſaw him moved with Repentance, he changed his infamous and painful Croſs into a Paradiſe of Glory and Happineſs, and filled his Soul with the ſweeteſt Comforts of his holy Spirit. This merciful Redeemer is the ſame Yeſterday and To-day, and ſhall be the ſame for ever. Therefore, if thou art reckoned amongſt the moſt filthy and abominable Sinners, if thou doſt groan under the Burden of thy Sins, and art moved with Contrition, *Heb.* xiii. thou oughteſt not to caſt off thy Hopes, and be diſcouraged; draw near with Humility to thy Saviour's Croſs, and waſh thyſelf in the Blood that comes out of his Veins. All the diſeaſed Perſons that entered into the Pool of *Bethesda*, were healed of all Manner of Diſtempers, *John* v. Thus all ſpiritually diſeaſed, are cured in this divine Pool of all their Griefs. It is not neceſſary to ſtay till a good Angel came from Heaven to move the Waters; for Chriſt's Blood is always freſh, living, and of the ſame Virtue and Efficacy. We need not fear, that others ſhould ſtep down before us, or that the Throng ſhould hinder us; for a thouſand Worlds may be all healed at the ſame Inſtant. Neither can we pretend, that there is nobody to caſt us into this myſtical Pool; for our Lord will never refuſe to admit you. When you ſhall have been Bed-rid eight-and-thirty Years, as the poor Man that was troubled with the Palſy; and when you ſhall be nailed to a Croſs, as the good Thief; you may nevertheleſs dip yourſelves into the divine Pool, and feel its ſaving and healing Virtue. It doth not only waſh away the Filth, and heal all thy Diſeaſes, but it gives alſo Life to the Dead, and renders the Living immortal. Whoſoever thou art that dippeſt thyſelf in this precious Blood, thou mayſt ſay with the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came

came into the World to ſave Sinners, of whom I am the chief, 1 *Tim.* i. Howbeit I have obtained Mercy; the Lord will deliver me from all wicked Works, and will preſerve me to his heavenly Kingdom; to him be Glory for ever and ever, *Amen*, 2 *Tim.* iv.

26. You underſtand therefore very well, believing Souls, that you have no Cauſe to fear Death, ſince all its Darts have been broken to Pieces, all its Armour hath been torn, and its Spoils appear ſo viſibly upon Chriſt's Croſs. You may ſee the Claws of this old Lion, the Paw of this devouring Bear, the Teeth and Poiſon of this infernal Serpent, and the Head of this prodigious Dragon; you may ſee Death ſwallowed up in Victory, and the Prince of Life leading it in Triumph. Follow then the glorious Chariot of this noble Conqueror, ſaying with the Apoſtle, *O Death! where is thy Sting? O Grave! where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; but bleſſed be God, who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. xv.

27. Therefore, when God ſhall draw near to you, under Death's Veil, be not terrified; ſeek not to run from him, and to hide yourſelves from his all-ſeeing Eye, unto which Darkneſs is as the Noon-Day, *Gen.* iii. Though you are by Nature poor, wretched, blind, and naked, you have more ſubſtantial Garments than Fig-leaves; for you have the Leaves of the Tree of Life, that are deſigned for the Salvation of the *Gentiles*, Rev. xxii. The Leaves that ſhall never fade ſhall cover all your Nakedneſs, and adorn your immortal Souls. For it is the eternal Righteouſneſs, the moſt accompliſhed Righteouſneſs of our Lord Jeſus, who hath been made unto us of God, Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. It is Jeſus Chriſt himſelf who is named, *The Lord our Righteouſneſs*. It is the the precious Garment of Salvation, the glorious Cloke of Righteouſneſs mentioned by the Prophet, *Iſa.* lxi. It is the Wedding Garment whitened in the Blood of the Lamb without

without Spot, and the fine and bright Linen, which are the Righteousness of the Saints, *Ezek.* xvi. In short, it is a Garment, which will not only cover and adorn you, but will also heal all your Infirmities, and advance you to Immortality, *Rev.* vii.

28. If you come before your heavenly Father with this perfumed Clothing of your elder Brother, *Jesus Christ*, *Gen.* xxvii. or rather, if you be clothed with him as with a Garment, *Rom.* i. you shall not only obtain the best and most advantageous Blessing, but you shall enter into the Possession of the incorruptible Inheritance, prepared for you from the Beginning of the World. *For the Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is eternal Life, through our Lord* Jesus Christ, *Rom.* vi.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who strengthens himself against the Fears of Death, by meditating upon the Death and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

O Merciful Saviour! who hast taken our mortal Nature, that thou mightest offer it up as a Sacrifice to God, vouchsafe me thine Assistance, and an Increase of my Faith and Hope, now that I am threatened to be devoured by Death. I embrace thy Cross and Passion as mine only relief; I take hold of the Horns of this Altar, and claim an Interest in thy Suffering and Righteousness. How grievous were thy Torments, O blessed Redeemer! which made thee sweat Drops of Blood, required the Comfort of Angels, and drew from thee strong Crying and Tears. But thy Death was not as mine, or as the Departure of thine holy Martyrs, who went willingly to Execution with Expression of Joy. Thy Death was an Atonement for the Sins of the whole World; but ours can yield no Satisfaction to the divine Justice; it makes us capable of reaping the Fruits of thine eternal Compassions

Compaſſions and Mediation. Thou ſufferedſt the heavy Strokes of God's Wrath, and tookeſt upon thee the Load of our Sins; but we, inſtead of this conſuming Fire, quenched by thy precious Death, perceive in our Death the Flames and Motions of thy Love. Inſtead of the Hand of thy Vengeance, we meet here with the Embraces of thy Mercy, ready to admit us into eternal Happineſs. Death appears to us armed with our Sins, and the dreadful Conſequences of Hell and Damnation. But I ſee all this Armour hanging upon thy Croſs, as the everlaſting Trophies and Monuments of thy Glory. Thou haſt been pierced with the Darts of a cruel Death, ſuffered the terrible Thunderbolts and Curſes of the Law; and thou haſt drunk the Dregs of the Cup of God's Fury for our Sakes, that thou mighteſt conquer Sin, Death, and Satan, *and free us from the Curſes we have deſerved. O wonderful Saviour! Thou haſt ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, ſhewing them openly, and triumphing over them on the Croſs. How marvellous are thy Works, and worthy of the continual Admiration of Men and Angels! What extraordinary Benefits do I reap from thy bleſſed Paſſion! Thy violent Sufferings are Preventions of my Torments; thy Bruiſes and Wounds are my Safety and Cure; thy Fears comfort and ſettle my Mind; thy diſtreſſed Soul fills mine full of Joy; thy Crying appeaſes the Troubles of my Conſcience; and thy Drops of Blood waſh away my Tears; thy Bitterneſs is my Sweetneſs, and thy Death my Victory, and thy Croſs my Triumph. I ſhall no longer tremble at the Approaches of Death, ſince thou haſt purchaſed for me Life and Immortality; and the Kingdom of Heaven is thine by a two-fold Right, as thou art the Son of God, and Heir of all Things; and as thou haſt paid for it a valuable Price, by thine infinite Merits. The firſt is ſufficient for thee: By the ſecond we have a Claim to this Kingdom, and ſhall poſſeſs it as the Fruits of thy Death and Sufferings. My Hope is in thee, O bleſſed Lord! ſuffer me not to fail in my Expectations. I know that nothing impure ſhall enter into thy holy City, but*

thy Blood shall wash and cleanse me from all my Sins. O glorious Lord! how wonderful art thou, and how precious is thy Death, the Atonement of thy Crimes, and the Ransom of the whole World! It is our Peace with God, our Reconciliation with Heaven, and with the Angels of Light. In a Word, it hath not only rescued me out of an Abyss of Misery, from an eternal Damnation, and the endless Torments of Hell; but it hath purchased for me Heaven and its Glory, and Paradise with all its unspeakable Delights. And the Method thou hast taken, O victorious Son of David! *to accomplish this, deserves our Admiration. By thine own Death thou hast conquered Death; and by entering into its dark Prison, hast given to Death its mortal Wound. Thy Cross therefore, to me, is as* Jacob's *Ladder, where at the Bottom I may sleep secure from Sin, and the Fears of the Grave, and by it ascend up to the Throne of Grace, to obtain Mercy and Help in Time of Need. It is the Source of Sweetness, Comfort, and Joy, and of the noblest future Expectations. It is a perfect Example to instruct me, how to die well, and how I ought to be prepared when I leave the World. Grant me Grace to imitate thee, to express to all my Relations that cordial Affection and Tenderness which I find in thee, to forgive my greatest and mortal Enemies, to pray for my Persecutors, to submit with Patience to thy Will; to behave myself with Courage and Resolution, with Zeal and Affection for thy Glory. Here I offer myself to thy Disposal. My Soul belongs to thee, as to its Creator and Redeemer; for thou hast ransomed it, washed, and sanctified it, clothed it with thy Righteousness, and put it into a Capacity of entering into thy heavenly Sanctuary, and of appearing before the Father of Lights. Take into thy Custody, O sweet Jesus, who hast been crucified for me, a wretched Sinner. Grant, I beseech thee, that I may for ever live and reign with thee in Glory, in thine eternal Kingdom.* Amen.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

The Fourth Conſolation againſt the Fears of Death *is, to meditate often upon our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in his Sepulchre.*

MAN naturally abhors and hates the Sight of Graves. Some cannot paſs by a Church-Yard, without expreſſing a Diſtaſte and Dread. Not only they who make their Abode in glorious Places, and ſtately Dwellings, but alſo they who reſide in poor Huts, or in pitiful Cabins; they who are ſhut up in black Dungeons, or expoſed to the Injury of the Weather, who have no other Covering but the Sky, can never think upon Death without Fear, when they call to mind, that this Body muſt go into the Bowels of the Earth, and lie down in a ſtinking and noiſome Grave.

If we will baniſh from our Souls this dangerous Apprehenſion, and needleſs Fear, we muſt conſider ſeriouſly, with a religious Application, that we ought never to abhor the Earth, becauſe our Bodies have been made of Earth; it hath been, as it were, the Mother from whence we proceed.

We muſt alſo conſider, that it is the General Rule of Nature, that all compounded Bodies muſt return, at their Diſſolution, every Part to its firſt Principle. Therefore, as the Soul aſcends up to its firſt Source, and returns to God who gave it; likewiſe it is no Wonder if the Body returns to Duſt, becauſe it proceeds from Duſt, and God hath pronounced a Sentence in the earthly Paradiſe, which ſhall never be revoked; *Duſt thou art, and to Duſt thou ſhalt return,* Gen. iii. *Nicodemus* enquired of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *How can a Man be born when he is old? Can he enter the ſecond Time into his Mother's Womb, and be*

born? John iii. This ridiculous and improbable Conceit is proved, in a Manner, to be true on this Occaſion, for we muſt enter again into the Womb of the Earth, our common Mother, that we may be born again, and paſs into another Life.

It is not amiſs to conſider often the notable Repreſentations of Death, mentioned by St. *Paul*, in the xvth Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*. For our Bodies are as the Seed which is caſt into the Earth, that it might bring forth. *O Fool, that which thou ſoweſt is not quickened except it die.* It cannot flouriſh until it rots. The Students of Nature inform us, that the Generation of one Thing is the Corruption of another. On this Occaſion we may affirm, that the Corruption and Diſſolution of this wretched Body is the Means and Way thatleads to a more glorious Generation. You that weep for the Deceaſe of your Friends and Kindred, when you ſee them laid in their Graves, remember what *David* ſaith, They that ſow in Tears, ſhall reap with Songs of Joy, *Pſal.* cxxvi.

Conſider, That Death is the Way of all Fleſh, and the Grave is the laſt Retreat which God hath appointed for all Living: So that if we be loth to enter into the Tomb, we muſt deſire Almighty God to grant us a Lodging by ourſelves, to change the common Courſe of Nature, or to create for us another World.

Now, the Sepulchre is not only the general Rendezvous of all Mankind, but it is a Couch where they reſt after their laborious and painful Race. Therefore, when the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of the Death of good Men, he ſaith, *They enter into Peace, they reſt in their Beds*, Iſa. lvii. For when he looks to the bleſſed State of their Souls, he tells us, that they are entered into that great and eternal Peace that reigns in Heaven. But when he caſts an Eye upon their Bodies, he ſaith, *they reſt in their Beds*. For this Cauſe the Places appointed to bury the Dead are named *ſleeping Places*, by the *Greeks*, to teach us, that they are fallen aſleep, in Expectation of the great Morn, when

when God ſhall awaken them with the Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet.

Therefore, when *Jacob* was ready to give up the Ghoſt, he commanded his Son *Joſeph* not to bury him in *Egypt, that he might ſleep with his Fathers*, Gen. xlvii. Likewiſe *Job* ſpeaks in the ſame Manner, *I ſhall ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth*, Job vii. And God uſed this Language unto *Moſes*, *Thou art going to ſleep with thy Fathers*, Deut. xxxi. And to *David*, *When thy Days be fulfilled, thou ſhalt ſleep with thy Fathers*, 2 Sam. vii. And when the Prophet *Daniel* ſpeaks of ſuch as were deceaſed ſince the Creation of the World, he ſaith, *They ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth*, Dan. xii.

Particularly take Notice, Chriſtian Souls, that when God ſpoke to *Moſes* from the Midſt of the burning Buſh, he told him, *I am the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob, *Exod.* iv. they had been dead may Ages before; nevertheleſs, God names himſelf their God. *Now God is not the God of the Dead but of the Living*, Matt. xxii. Thoſe holy Men were not dead in regard of their Souls; for they are immortal, and God hath admitted them into eternal Bliſs. Their Bodies alſo, to ſpeak properly, were not dead, but ſlept in their Graves, as our Saviour ſaid of *Jarius's* Daughter, *The Damſel is not dead, but ſleepeth*, Matt. ix. And of *Lazarus*, Lazarus *our Friend ſleepeth*, John xi. Moreover, we may juſtly ſay, that the Condition of our Bodies in the Grave is better, and more pleaſant than our daily Sleep; for when we reſt in our Beds, we are often diſturbed in our Fancy, we labour and ſweat, and the richeſt and moſt magnificent Couches are not free from this Evil; whereas in the Grave our Bodies are at Reſt, and ſecure from all Senſe of Pain, and enjoy a perfect Sleep, and a Reſt without Diſturbance.

The greateſt Princes, and the proudeſt Monarchs, are conſtrained to take up their Lodging, one after another, here in this Houſe, which God hath prepared

for all Living, and to repoſe themſelves on that Couch, which is to receive all the Sons of *Adam*. When the ſacred Hiſtory gives an Account of the Kings of *Judah* and of *Iſrael*; it adds, at the End of their Life, *he ſlept with his Fathers*. Let us be ever ſo wretched, poor and miſerable, we ſhall be entertained in this Dwelling of Kings, and lay ourſelves down upon their Beds; therefore, when *Job*, through the Grievouſneſs of his Pain, complained, becauſe he had not died immediately after his Birth, he ſaith, *For now ſhould I have lain ſtill and been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept, then had I been at Reſt, with Kings, and Counſellors of the Earth, which built deſolate Places for themſelves, or with Princes that had Gold, who filled their Houſes with Silver.*

It is in this Houſe, and upon this Couch, that the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, Evangeliſts, Martyrs, and generally all the Faithful, reſt, who have lived in all the Ages of the World; as it is recorded of St. *Stephen*, when he commended his Soul into the Hands of the Lord Jeſus, that *he fell aſleep*, Acts vii. Therefore, when St. *Paul* reproves the *Corinthians*, and acquaints them, that God had puniſhed them with divers Diſeaſes and Death, becauſe they had profaned the Lord's Supper; he tells them, *For this Cauſe many are feeble and ſick amongſt you, and many ſleep*. And when he ſpeaks of all thoſe that were dead in the Profeſſion of Chriſt's Religion, he ſaith, *They ſleep in Jeſus*; and he names them, *they that ſleep*. Now, we are not better and nobler than the Saints of Paradiſe, to expect that our Bodies ſhould receive a better and more favourable Entertainment than they.

In ſhort, There is nothing more able to remove from our Fancy that Horror of our Graves, than the Conſideration of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who did enter into the Earth, like other Men, and laid himſelf down there. He hath ſanctified and perfumed that Place with his divine Preſence, and hath made

made it the Object of our Deſires, and the Cauſe of our Glory. For there is no Subject but thinks it an Honour to lodge in his Prince's Chamber, and to lie down and ſleep upon the Bed, where he hath taken his Reſt, though he hath remained there but a Moment, or an Hour. O bleſſed Tomb, where Death and Life, Diſgrace and Glory, are lodged together, and where the Prince of Life, the Author of all Honour and Happineſs, reſted himſelf!

Chriſtians, who deſire to baniſh from your Souls all Fears of Death, and Apprehenſions of your Graves, look upon your Sepulchres in the ſame Manner, as if you ſhould ſee there Jeſus Chriſt, the King of Glory, the Prince of your Salvation, yet remaining aſleep. When old *Jacob* heard the miſtaken News of the Death of his Son *Joſeph*, he was overcome with a violent Grief, ſo that he cried out, *I ſhall go down with Sorrow to my Son into the Grave.* But the certain News of the Death and Burial of the true *Joſeph* will fill us full of unſpeakable Comforts, and will cauſe us to ſpeak in another Manner, I ſhall go down to my Father into the Sepulchre with Joy. The Prophet *Eliſha* raiſed to Life a Child which was laid in his Chamber upon his Bed; when he ſtretched himſelf upon it, the Soul that was departed came again. And *Eliſha* raiſed another in the ſame Manner, by applying his Mouth to the Child's, his Hands and Eyes to his. But, believing Soul, God works for thee, on this Occaſion, a far more wonderful Miracle: For our Reſurrection and Life proceed from the Death and Burial of our great Prophet. If we go into his holy Tomb, if we lay ourſelves down upon his precious Body, if we embrace it with a true and lively Faith, and a ſerious Repentance, he will quicken us again, and cauſe us to become immortal: For he hath been pleaſed to enter into the State of the Dead, with an Intent to procure us a Bleſſing, and a glorious Immortality.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Chriſtian, who ſtrengthens himſelf againſt the frightful Aſpect of the Grave, by looking upon our Lord Jeſus Chriſt laid in his Tomb.

O Wonderful Mediator between God and Man! Thou art God immortal, and yet haſt vouchſafed to take upon thee our mortal Nature, and to die for me a miſerable Sinner, and to remain for a Time in the State of the Dead, that thou mighteſt procure to me a bleſſed Immortality. Give me Grace to meditate, as I ought, upon thy ſacred Body, wrapped up in a Winding-ſheet, and laid in the Earth. For by this Means, ſweet Jeſus, I ſhall be reconciled to the Sight of the Grave; I ſhall look with a ſtedfaſt and ſettled Countenance on the Pit into which I muſt enter, when thou ſhalt appoint it. For the Servant is not greater than his Maſter. It belongs not to the Creature to prefer itſelf above the Creator. Since I expect to ſhare in thy Glory and Exaltation; it is but juſt and reaſonable that I take ſome Part in thy Diſgraces and Abaſement. My Reaſon, aſſiſted by thine Holy Spirit, teacheth me that I muſt be content to be wrapped up in thy Darkneſs, and remain with thee in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, ſince I hope to be clothed one Day with Light, and crowned with an eternal Life. I muſt not only look upon the Grave without Fear, but I ſhall conſider it with Joy, in regard thou haſt honoured it with thy holy Preſence, and perfumed it with thy divine and celeſtial Odour. I ſhall look upon it, as if thou didſt yet lie down in it, as if I were to keep thee Company there, my Lord and my God. A dead Man returned to Life again, when he did but touch the Bones of thy Prophets; but I do not only touch the Prince of Prophets, but embrace thee by Faith, as thou art, for my Sins, and as reſting in thy Grave for my Salvation. Thou ſhalt therefore make me ſenſible of thy divine Virtue, put in me the Seeds of Immortality, and raiſe

raiſe my Hopes up to Heaven. My Soul hath already a Share in the firſt Reſurrection, and one Day this infirm Body ſhall return to Newneſs of Life. If my Reſurrection be not ſo quick and ſpeedy, as that of the Dead raiſed to Life by the Prophet, it ſhall be far more glorious and laſting, that I may bleſs thee with all thy Saints, and praiſe thee for ever, with thine Inheritance in Heaven. Amen.

CHAP. XVII.

The Fifth Conſolation againſt the Fears of Death *is, to meditate upon the Reſurrection of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

AS there is nothing more grievous and unſufferable, than to behold a proud and inſulting Enemy, who is always victorious, and whom none can overcome in his inſolent and braving Humour; likewiſe there is nothing more pleaſant and comfortable than to ſee ſuch a Pride caſt down, and to triumph over ſuch an Enemy. Therefore the Children of *Iſrael*, who had long groaned under the cruel Tyranny of *Paraoh*, ſang with Joy a Song of Thankſgiving, when God deſtroyed that wretched Tyrant, and buried him and his Army in the Waves of the *Red Sea.* For this Cauſe, when the Red Dragon, the ancient Serpent, called the Devil and *Satan*, Rev. xxii. who ſeduceth whole Nations, was overcome and caſt down from Heaven to the Earth; there were Songs of Joy and Gladneſs heard in Heaven, *Rev.* xii. *Now is come Salvation and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Chriſt; for the Accuſer of our Brethren is caſt down, which accuſed them before our God Day and Night; therefore rejoice, ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them.*

From hence let us conclude, Chriſtian Souls, as it was a grievous Affliction, and a ſenſible Grief, to behold Death tyrannizing over all the World, and ſhutting up in its Dungeons, Kings and Monarchs, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, and Martyrs, and generally all the Children of *Adam* of what Condition or Degree ſoever; likewiſe, it is a great Comfort, and unſpeakable Joy to us, to behold this cruel and proud Enemy brought down, overcome, and diſarmed; to ſee our Lord Jeſus Chriſt marching out of Death's Fortifications, loaden with its Spoils: Rejoice, therefore, ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them; for the Murderer of our Brethren is ſwallowed up into Victory.

We, who are the Members of this great Conqueror, have a Share in this Honour and Glory; in his Perſon, we are Conquerors of Death, ſo that we may ſay with the Apoſtle, *That God hath quickened us together, and raiſed us up with him.*

This Prince of Life hath not only looſened all the Bands of Death, and broken to Pieces all its Chains, but he hath led away Death in Triumph, and made it ſubject to his celeſtial Empire. He hath an abſolute Power over Death, as he himſelf declares in theſe Words, *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore,* Amen; *and have the Keys of Hell, and of Death.*

For it ſtands with Reaſon, that if this invincible Lord, when he was in the Priſon of Death, commanded over Death itſelf; he broke in Pieces its Iron Bars, and its brazen Gates; if he cauſed the Dead to go out, and led them into the holy City; now, that he is out of the Grave, a victorious Conqueror, he muſt needs command with an uncontrollable Power this dreadful Enemy, which he hath already overcome, and brought under by his almighty Hand.

O Death? fret and foam out thy Rage and Fury; I ſee that thou art tied as a Priſoner to the triumphing Chariot of Jeſus Chriſt my Saviour; and I am certain,

certain, that thou canſt do nothing without Leave, and that thou canſt not go a Step, unleſs he lengthens thy Chain.

As *Joſhua*, when he had overcome the Kings of *Canaan*, called for his Captains, and ſpoke to them in this Manner, *Come near, and put your Feet upon the Necks of theſe Kings; fear not, nor be diſmayed; be ſtrong, and of good Courage*; likewiſe, we may imagine, believing Souls, that our divine *Joſhua*, the Conqueror of Death, calls to us from Heaven, Tread upon this wretched Death with Boldneſs; fear not, nor be diſmayed.

The Children of *Iſrael*, who trembled at the Threatenings of *Goliah*, were freed from all Apprehenſions, when they ſaw him fall with a Stone from *David's* Sling, ſo that the moſt timorous could have freely put their Feet upon his Neck. And ſhall not you, Chriſtians, baniſh from your Hearts all Fear and Dread of Death, now that you ſee it is caſt down at the Feet of our true *David*, that great Shepherd and Biſhop of our Souls? For though it opens its Jaws, and foams out Flames of Fire, it hath, nevertheleſs, received the Stroke of Death, and is at the laſt Gaſp.

And as the Servant of *Jonathan*, the Son of *Saul*, diſpatched and killed thoſe whom his Maſter had caſt down; thus, we need but purſue the glorious Victories of the Son of the King of Kings; or rather, we need but gather up the pleaſant Fruits of his Conqueſts. For this Prince of Life, that hath overcome Death for us, offers to overcome it alſo in us, with the Weapons with which he arms us. In ſhort, to ſpeak properly, there can be no Death for ſuch as are incorporated in Jeſus Chriſt by a true and lively Faith. For he that lives, and believeth in him, ſhall never die; and he that believeth in him, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live, *John* xi.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for the believing Soul, who arms himſelf againſt the Fears of Death, by meditating upon the Reſurrection of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

LORD Jeſus, who haſt been fully declared to be the Son of God with Power, by the Reſurrection from the Dead, and who liveſt for ever and ever, ſtrengthen me in my Weakneſs, comfort me in my Sorrow, and drive from my Soul all Fears and Apprehenſions of Death. O wonderful Saviour! I need no longer dread this cruel and proud Enemy; for thou haſt broken all its Fetters and Chains, and haſt overcome Death and the Grave. O glorious and triumphing Monarch! ſhall I tremble before a diſcomfited and diſarmed Enemy, whom I ſee lying under my Feet, and chained to thy triumphing Chariot? I need but follow the ſacred Footſteps of thy Victory, and gather its excellent Fruits. If thou haſt been able to deal with Death when thou waſt ſhut up in a Dungeon, if thou didſt then bring down its Pride, and carry away its Priſoners, what may I not expect from thy victorious and almighty Arm, now that thou haſt in thy Hand the Keys of Hell and Death? O moſt mighty and mercifnl Lord, thou haſt not only overcome Death for me, but thou wilt alſo overcome it by me, who am thy Child, and the ſheep of thy Paſture, whereof thou haſt paid the Ranſom. Thou art not only raiſed from the Dead, but thou art alſo the Reſurrection and the Life. Thou art the Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory and Immortality; ſo that he that liveth and believeth in thee ſhall never die; and whoſoever believeth in thee, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live. Sampſon's *Act was admirable when he ſlept until Midnight, roſe up, and carried away the Gates of* Gaza *upon his ſhoulders up to an high Mountain: But who would not admire thee, O invincible* Nazarite, *who, having ſlept until the third Day in the Bowels of the Earth, didſt riſe again by thine divine Virtue, carry away the Gates of Hell, and make them to become the Gates of Heaven, and the Entrance into the celeſtial*

celeſtial Paradiſe! Let me die, ſince the Redeemer liveth, and intends to introduce me into an happy Life, purchaſed for me with his moſt precious Blood, and ſecured for me by his glorious Reſurrection. Amen.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Sixth Conſolation againſt the Fears of Death *is, the Aſcenſion of Jeſus Chriſt into Heaven, and ſitting at the Right-hand of God.*

IT is indeed a great Joy and Comfort to behold a cruel and proud Enemy overcome and diſarmed, and ourſelves freed, by that Means, from the heavy Yoke of his unſufferable Tyranny; but our Joy would be turned into Grief and our Comfort into Sadneſs, if we did but perceive at the ſame Time, the Author of our Freedom choaked with his own Blood, and breathing out his laſt Gaſp at the Moment of his Victory. It is requiſite, to render our Satisfaction complete and perfect, that his Triumphs might be everlaſting, and that he might be advanced to the higheſt Glory and ſovereign Empire. Now there is no Enemy more cruel and terrible than Death. We have beheld it diſarmed upon the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and perfectly vanquiſhed and ſubdued by his glorious Reſurrection. But if with the Eye of our Faith we look a little higher to the glorious Aſcenſion of our divine Saviour, we ſhall ſee the ſame Death bound to his triumphing Chariot, and this *conquering Redeemer* exalted above the higheſt Heavens, and ſitting glorioufly at the Right-hand of God; we ſhall ſee him inveſted in an Almighty Power, adored by all Creatures; we ſhall ſee him commanding not only the Angels of Light, and the celeſtial Spirits, that are about his magnificent Throne, but exerciſing Dominion alſo over the World, over Death, the Devils, and Hell. Becauſe he hath been *obedient unto Death, yea, to the ignominious Death of the Croſs, God, hath*

hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhall bow, of Things in Heaven, in Earth, and under the Earth, Phil. ii. *And that every Tongue ſhall confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is the Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.*

Every Soldier ſhares not always in the Triumph of the General, and all the Subjects taſte not of their Prince's Happineſs; but as we are the Brethren of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Members of his myſtical Body, we have a Share in his Triumph, and in the Glory of his Empire. Therefore the Apoſtle St. *Paul* informs us, *That our Life*, that is to ſay, our Glory and eternal Felicity, *is hid with Chriſt in God.* In another Place he tells us, in expreſs Words, *that God who is rich in Mercy, hath made us ſit in heavenly Places with Jeſus Chriſt.*

This glorious Saviour is gone to take Poſſeſſion of the Kingdom of Heaven, not only for himſelf, but alſo in our Names, and for us. Therefore he informs the holy Apoſtles, and all true Believers, *That in his Father's Houſe there are many Manſions; I am going to prepare a Place there for you.* In the ſame Manner he ſpeaks in that admirable Prayer, in the which he conſecrates himſelf to God, for the great Work of our Redemption: *Father I will that they alſo, whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory, which thou haſt given me.* For the ſame Reaſon, St. *Paul* tells us, in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* for our Comfort, *Heb.* vi. that Chriſt is gone into Heaven, *as our Fore-runner.*

The High-prieſt of the *Jews* entered into the earthly Sanctuary, to preſent himſelf before God for the People, *Heb.* ix. Thus our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is gone into the Heavenly Sanctuary, to appear for us in the Preſence of God. The High-prieſt of the *Jews* carried upon his Breaſt and Shoulders the Names of the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael*, but Jeſus Chriſt hath engraven us upon his Heart, according to the Prayer of the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, Cant. viii. *Set me as a*

Seal upon thine Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm; for Love is as ſtrong as Death. The High-prieſt of the *Jews* did caſt off the Names of the twelve Tribes with the Robes; but neither Death nor Life, nor Things preſent, nor Things to come, ſhall ever ſeparate us from the Love of God in Jeſus Chriſt, *Rom.* viii.

The royal Diadem that was put upon *Eſther's* Head, never cauſed her to forget her People and Parentage; ſhe was mightily grieved for Haman's Conſpiracy, and the Decree which he had cauſed the King *Ahaſuerus* to ſign and ſeal with a Signet. I may likewiſe ſay, that the Glory to which our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is now raiſed, can never make him forget the People that he hath redeemed with his Blood. He is not unmindful of *Satan's* Plots, nor of the Sentence and Doom pronounced againſt us by the great Monarch of the World, and confirmed by his great Seal. His glorious Head may be crowned with the Rainbow, but his merciful Heart is inflamed with Love for us. He thinks it no Diſgrace to acknowledge us for his Brethren, and to pray to God for us, who ſits upon his Throne, where thouſand Millions wait upon him, and ten thouſand Thouſands worſhip him. He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all ſuch as draw near to God through him; for he lives always to intercede for us. If the Father hath always granted him his Requeſt, when he was in his greateſt Abaſement, can we imagine, that his Interceſſion will be fruitleſs now, that he is aſcended up to the higheſt Glory?

From this Exaltation to Heaven, he beholds all our Encounters and our Strugglings with Death. He ſees all the Enemies that aſſault us, and the Dangers unto which we are expoſed. He is acquainted with the deep Malice, and crafty Deſigns, of the Enemies of our Salvation. He perceives all the Darts that they let fly againſt us. Therefore he covers us with a Shield, and will not ſuffer us to be overcome by Temptation. He fulfils his Virtue in our Infirmities, and makes us more than Conquerors. He hath an Eye always upon his Flock, he holds his Sheep all in his Hand, and none is able to pluck them from thence.

When

When he was upon Earth in his Agony, at this Word, that dropt out of his Mouth, *I am He*, John xviii. His Enemies fell backward; and when he was in Death's Priſon, he forced it to obey him. And ſhall not he, now that he is exalted up to the higheſt Heavens, in the Glory of his Triumph, have the ſame Command and Power over Death, the World, and Hell? When he walked upon the Waters, he cried to his Apoſtles, *It is I; be not afraid*, John vi. How much rather may he ſpeak to us in this Manner, now that he ſits upon the Throne, that can never be moved! Chriſtian Soul, who trembles at the Approaches of Death, imagine that the Lord Jeſus, crowned with Glory, calls to thee from Heaven: Fear not; for I call thee, and hold out unto the my Arms, I that am thy Saviour and Redeemer, who have ſatisfied for all thy Sins with my Blood, and who have redeemed thee from the Curſe of the Law, and eternal Damnation. I have diſarmed God's Juſtice, vanquiſhed Hell, broken the Serpent's Head, and ſwallowed up Death in Victory. I have purchaſed for thee the Glories of Heaven, and the Delights of Paradiſe; I have trampled upon the World and all its Powers. I am worſhipped by all the Church triumphing in Heaven, and by Legions of Angels that fly about my Throne. I will therefore ſend ſome of them to guard thee, and when thou ſhalt leave the Body, where thou liveſt as a Stranger, they ſhall bring up thy Soul into this magnificent Abode of Immortality, whither I am come to prepare a Place for thee.

Without Doubt, if the Anchor of our Hope is fixed within the Veil, that is, in Heaven, where Jeſus Chriſt is gone in as our Forerunner, we ſhall not apprehend the moſt contrary and boiſterous Storms raiſed againſt us by the Prince of the Powers of the Air, who works with Efficacy in the Children of Rebellion. We ſhall tread under Foot all the Billows of this troubleſome Sea, and through theſe ſwelling Waves we ſhall march ſafe to our divine Jeſus. If at any Time we begin to ſink, and that our Soul is frighted, this Almighty Lord,

Lord, who hath not only delivered himſelf, but is the Saviour and Deliverer of his Church, will ſpeak to us as the Apoſtle, *O Man of little Faith, why didſt thou doubt?* Knoweſt thou not, that I command the Winds, that I can ſtill the Waves, and drive away the Tempeſt? Knoweſt thou not that I have in my Hands the Keys of Hell, and of Death? When a Perſon is to go to a Place of Reſt and Happineſs, that he cannot paſs to it, but through a painful and thorny Paſſage, he marches with Reſolution and Courage, when a Friend of his is gone before, and ſtretcheth out to him his Hand to help him. Now it is not poſſible to attain to the Glories of Heaven, and the Joys of Paradiſe, but through the Paſſage of Death; a Paſſage very uneaſy and grievous to our preſent Seeming; but Jeſus Chriſt, who loves us with an eternal Love, hath gone through this Paſſage before us. He is paſſed from this World to the Father; he is gone to his God and to our God. And that we might go to him, he hath ſent the Light of his holy Word to direct us, *John* ii. He vouchſafes to us his Staff and his Rod to comfort us, *Pſal.* xxxiii. and ſtretcheth out the Right-hand of his Almighty Power, to cauſe us to paſs from Death to Life; *Where I am*, ſaith he, *there ſhall alſo my Servants be*, John xii.

When the Apoſtles went up to *Jeruſalem*, and Jeſus went before them, *Mark* ix. they were terrified and frighted; but we that go up to the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and tread upon the Footſteps of this mighty Saviour, ought to be full of Boldneſs and Chriſtian Confidence.

This great God and Saviour reigns in Heaven; he commands the Earth, the Sea, and the Deep; therefore we may die without Fear, and with an holy Joy. For who would not rejoice to enter into the glorious Palace of Immortality, where we ſhall ſee not only the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, Martyrs, the holy and bleſſed Virgin, with all the Saints of Paradiſe; but we ſhall ſee, Face to Face, our great God and Saviour Je-

sus Christ, whom so many Kings and Prophets have desired to see and hear? While we remain in these Bodies, we are absent from this victorious Lord, therefore rather desire to be absent from the Body, and to be with Christ. This Consolation causeth the holy Apostle to confess, *That his Desire was to depart, and to be with Christ, which was far better for him*, Phil. i. 23.

The Queen of *Sheba*, left her Kingdom, and came from a Corner of the Earth, to see King *Solomon*, who was but a Type of Christ, and who had but a little of his Wisdom and Glory: And is there any Treasure on Earth and Honour in this Age, or Pleasure in this Life, that might hinder us from going to see our Saviour Jesus Christ? When he was in his Infancy, the Shepherds left their Flocks and made haste towards *Bethlehem* to look upon him; the Wisemen came from the East to adore him; and if he were yet on Earth, we should undertake a tedious Pilgrimage to the Ends of the World, and part with our dearest Enjoyments, to see him. But the little Village of *Bethlehem* is nothing in Comparison of the celestial *Jerusalem*; and what is the Sight of the Lord Jesus in Swadling-clothes, lying in a Manger, and in the Arms of his blessed Mother, in Comparison of the Sight of a Christ clothed with Light, crowned with Glory, and sitting on the Right-hand of God the Father, upon a magnificent Throne, worshipped by all the Angels, and the glorified Spirits; The Father of the Faithful was transported with Joy, when he saw in Spirit the Day of the Lord; and the Spouse in the *Canticles* was exceeding glad, when she heard him knocking at her Door; and old *Simeon* was ravished above Measure, when he beheld Christ in his Arms: How much more shall we be transported and ravished into Admiration and Joy, when we shall look upon him as he is now in his highest Glory, and raised to the most magnificent State, and when we shall enjoy him never to leave him again! When St. *Stephen* beheld the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ sitting at the

the Right-hand of God the Father, his Face became radiant as that of an Angel. Therefore how luminous and ſhining ſhall our Countenances be, when we ſhall enter into theſe Places of Light, and behold Face to Face this bleſſed Redeemer for ever!

When old *Jacob* heard that *Joſeph* was alive, and reigning in *Egypt*, whom he had ſo tenderly loved, and for whom he had ſhed ſo many Tears, he was paſſionately deſirous to ſee again this dear Son, and to be Witneſs of his Glory: *It is enough*, ſaith he; *Joſeph is yet alive; I will go and ſee him before I die*, Gen. xlv. And what think you, believing Souls, when you underſtand that your true *Joſeph*, whom you heartily love, lives and reigns above in Heaven, and that he is there worſhipped by all the glorified Spirits? Do not you earneſtly deſire to ſee his Face, and to behold his divine Glory and Happineſs? This old Father was weak and feeble through Age, and oppreſſed with Grief; but his Spirit revived when he ſaw the Waggons that *Joſeph* had ſent to fetch him: And you, my Chriſtian Brethren, when old Age and Sickneſs have weakened your Bodies, and Grief and Diſpleaſure have undermined your Hearts, do not you feel yourſelves revive when Death draws near, and you perceive, with the Eyes of Faith, the Horſes and Chariots which Chriſt hath ſent to carry you away to the Paradiſe of his Glory? *Joſeph* received his Father and Brethren with Tears of Joy, and all the Houſe of *Pharaoh* rang with outward Expreſſions of Gladneſs: With what Joy, with what Kindneſſes and Love, will Chriſt embrace us! What Rejoicing will there be in Heaven at your Arrival! It is not to be expreſſed, but with Tongues of Angels. *Joſeph* fed his Father and his Brethren; but he never yielded up to them any Part of his Glory: Whereas our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who excels *Joſeph* as much in Power and Magnificence, as in Love and Mercy, ſhall not only feed us with the Bread of his Kingdom, and

give us to drink of the Rivers of his Pleaſures, but he will alſo impart unto us ſome of his Glory and Splendour, as he promiſed to his Apoſtles, *I appoint unto you a Kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me*, Luke xxii. *To him that overcometh, I will grant to ſit with me on my Throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne: Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*, Rev. iii. *Joſeph's* Brethren, notwithſtanding his Dignity and Power, became Slaves; but Jeſus Chriſt will place upon our Head a Crown of pure Gold. *Joſeph* could not defend his Brethren from Death; all died one after another, and he alſo in his Time yielded up the Ghoſt: But Jeſus Chriſt, who is riſen from the Dead, dieth no more; Death hath no more Dominion over him; ſo that he lives for ever and ever, and will cauſe us all to become immortal. Therefore, inſtead of deſiring, as *Jacob*, to live to go down into *Egypt*, to ſee his Son *Joſeph*, we ſhould earneſtly deſire to die, that we might aſcend up into Heaven, there to behold our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, our Father and Redeemer. When *Jacob* embraced again this wonderful and beloved Child, in the exceeding Tranſport of his Joy and Love, he burſt out into this Kind of Language, *Let me die, now that I have ſeen again thy Face, and that thou art alive.* On the contrary, when we ſhall embrace Chriſt in his Glory, when we ſhall behold his Divine Countenance, we ſhall ſpeak in another Manner: My Lord, and my God, ſince I now ſee thee alive, and reigning in Heaven, I ſhall live alſo and reign with thee for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a believing Soul, which arms itſelf againſt the Fears of Death, by meditating on the glorious Aſcenſion of Jeſus Chriſt into Heaven, and his ſitting at the Right-Hand of God.

O Holy and Divine Saviour, I have often looked upon thy generous Behaviour, and glorious Victories, to ſtrengthen myſelf againſt all Apprehenſions of Death; but, if thou wilt render my Joy moſt perfect and accompliſhed, grant me Grace to meditate upon thy divine Triumph. As thou haſt been engaged in many Encounters for my Sake, and haſt vouchſafed to give me a Share in thy Victory, grant me alſo a Share in thy glorious Aſcenſion and Triumph. As thou haſt ſuffered for my Sins, and art riſen again for my Juſtification; thou art alſo aſcended up into Heaven to prepare a Place for me. Thou art willing, that I ſhould be admitted into thy noble and divine Palace; that I ſhould be where thou art, that I may behold thy Glory, which thou haſt enjoyed with God the Father, before the Creation of the World. O ſweet and merciful Lord, what Cauſe have I to fear to go to Heaven, ſince thou art there ſeated in the higheſt Glory and Felicity, and ſtretcheſt out thy merciful Hand to receive me! Have I not good Reaſon to expect to be glorified in thy Kingdom, ſince thou thyſelf doſt beſtow upon thoſe that ſerve thee, immortal Crowns and Sceptres? O great God and Saviour, thy Throne is ſurrounded with Glory and Splendour; nevertheleſs I will draw near unto it with Boldneſs; for it is a Throne of Love, and a Throne of Mercy, unto which every penitent Sinner may come. Round about this glorious Throne I ſee a Rainbow of Emerald-colour, that certifies me that thy Covenant is everlaſting. When thy Glory and Majeſty increaſed, thy Love for me was not diminiſhed, and thy Compaſſion and Goodneſs were always alike. Thou art the ſame Yeſterday and To-day, and thou ſhalt always

be the ſame for ever. Thou haſt been pleaſed, for my Salvation, to lie in a Manger, and to be nailed to a Croſs. Thou haſt given thy Soul for my Ranſom; and haſt ſpilt thy precious Blood to waſh and cleanſe me from my Sins, and to mark me a Way that I might enter into thine holy Sanctuary. In the midſt of all that Glory and Light with which thou art now clothed, thou haſt not thought it a Scorn to acknowledge me for thy Brother, and for a Member of thy myſtical Body. It is for my Sake that thou appeareſt before thine heavenly Father; and it is for me that thou offereſt up unto him Prayers and Supplications. O wonderful Lord, it is in thy Power to give me the Things which thou haſt merited by thy Sufferings, and which thou deſireſt for me by thy Prayers and Interceſſion; for all Power is given unto thee in Heaven and in Earth. O Sovereign Monarch of the whole World, haſt thou not made us this great and gracious Promiſe, When I ſhall be lifted up from the Earth, I ſhall draw all Men after me? *And is it not for us that thou haſt prayed in this excellent Manner,* Father, I will that they alſo, whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory, which thou haſt given me? *Since therefore thou haſt left this wretched Earth, to go and reign above in Heaven, take unto thee my Soul, O wonderful Redeemer, and deliver it from this Valley of Tears and Miſery. Cauſe it to underſtand at the Time of its Departure theſe Words of Joy and eternal Comfort,* Verily I ſay unto thee, this Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe. *Lord Jeſus, draw me with the Cords of thy Mercy and Grace, and I ſhall run after thee. And in Regard I muſt of Neceſſity paſs through Death to come to thee, the Prince of Life and Immortality, give me Grace to conſider of it in the ſame Manner as the Prophet* Elias *did the fiery Chariot that lifted him up to Heaven; or as* Jacob *did the Waggon that carried him into* Egypt, *to his Son that reigned there. This holy Father in a Tranſport of Joy cryed out,* Let me ſee my Son *Joſeph* again, and then let me die. *But when I*

ſhall

shall be ravished with an unspeakable and glorious Joy, I shall speak in another manner: Let me die, that I may behold my true Joseph, *the Soul of my Soul, the Light of Life, the Author of my Glory and Happiness. O sweet Jesus, I shall freely and willingly leave this wretched and infirm Dwelling, to enter into thy heavenly Palace, to behold thy Glory and Magnificence. O King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, when shall I hear that divine Wisdom that drops from thy Lips? When shall I see thee seated upon the throne of thy glorious Majesty, where Thousand Thousands wait upon thee, and Ten Millions worship thee? When shall I enter into the glorious Company of Saints, and blessed Spirits, that sing forth thy Praises, and cast at thy Feet their precious Crowns? O victorious Monarch, who art now in thy Kingdom enjoying a perfect Happiness, forget not thy poor Servant; be not unmindful of thy Son [or Daughter] who am now overwhelmed with the Sorrows of this miserable Life, and the Anguish of Death. Let not the Songs of the holy Angels, and the Applauses of all the glorified Spirits, hinder thee from listening to my Sighs and Groans. O Almighty and merciful Lord, look upon me with the Eyes of thy Love, and reach unto me thine helping Hand. Send to me thine Angels of Light to receive my Soul, and protect me from the Angels of Darkness, that endeavour to destroy me, and to drag me headlong into Hell. Let some of those glorious Spirits that wait for thine Orders, and fly at thy Command, deliver me from Death, and carry me upon their Wings into thy Bosom. I see the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ sitting at the Right-hand of God the Father. Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.* Amen.

CHAP. XIX.

The Seventh Conſolation againſt the Fears of Death *is, our ſtrict and inſeparable Union with Jeſus Chriſt, by the Means of his Holy Spirit, and the Firſt-fruits of our bleſſed Immortality.*

OUR Lord Jeſus Chriſt is not only alive, and triumphs in Heaven, but it is from thence our Life, our Glory, and our bleſſed Immortality, proceed. For, as the Father hath Life in himſelf, he hath alſo given to the Son to have Life in himſelf; and as the Father raiſeth and quickeneth the Dead, likewiſe the Son quickeneth whomſoever he will: So that we may not only ſay to him, as St. *Peter*, *Thou haſt the Words of eternal Life*, John ix. but we may juſtly ſpeak to him in *David's* Language, *With thee is the Fountain of Life*; *in thy Light*, *ſhall we ſee Light*, Pſal: xxxvi. Therefore, all thoſe that are united and incorporated into this Prince of Life, participate of the Fulneſs of his Holy Spirit, and by that means they become Partakers of Immortality and Happineſs. Now, by the Virtue of Chriſt's Death and Paſſion, we are not only made Partakers of the Fruits of his Sufferings, but we are united to, and incorporated in him; ſo that by that means we have obtained not only the great and precious Promiſes of Glory and Immortality, which he hath purchaſed for us by the infinite Merits of his Sufferings; but we receive the Firſt-fruits and Fore-taſtes of our future Bleſſedneſs.

He that is lifted up, and dwells on High, quickens the Spirits of the Humble, *Iſa.* lvii. He dwells in our Hearts by Faith, *Eph.* iii. 1. He pours into our Souls his holy and quickening Spirit: For, be-

cauſe

cauſe we are the Children of God, he hath ſent the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts to cry *Abba*, Father, *Gal.* iv. Whoſoever hath not this Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, he is none of his. By the means of this Spirit he dwells in us, and we in him; we become Members of his Body; and we may boaſt, that we are his Fleſh and his Bones.

All Things, that are moſt ſtrictly united by Nature or Art, are employed to repreſent this admirable Union, *John* vi. which we enjoy with Jeſus Chriſt, by the means of his Spirit that quickens us, *Rom.* xiii. From hence are derived theſe Expreſſions of the holy Apoſtle, *We have put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, Gal. iii. And that *when we draw near to him who is the living Stone, rejected of Men, but lifted up, and of great Price with God*, 1 Pet. ii. *we, like ſo many living Stones, are built up together to make a ſpiritual Houſe*: For the ſame Reaſon our Saviour informs us, *John* xv. *That he is the Tree, and that we are the Branches.* And St. *Paul* aſſures us, that if we are become one Plant with him by the Conformity of his Death, we ſhall alſo be one by the Reſemblance of his Reſurrection, *Rom.* vi.

To expreſs to us that this ſacred Union contains many Ties of Love, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is repreſented as our Brother, our Father, and our Bridegroom: Therefore the Apoſtle tells us, that he thinks it no Diſgrace to own us for his Brethren, in ſaying, *Heb.* i. *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren*; and alſo where he informs us, *Rom.* iii. that *God hath predeſtinated us to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the Firſt-born among many Brethren.* And after his Reſurrection, he ſpeaks thus to *Mary Magdalene*, John xx. *Touch me not; for I am not yet aſcended to my Father; but go to my Brethren, and ſay unto them, I aſcend unto my Father, and to your Father, and to my God, and to your God.* Therefore this glorious Redeemer, ſhewing himſelf unto God, *Heb.* ii. with all

the Elect, ſaith, *Here I am, and the Children which thou haſt given me.* And by the Mouth of *Hoſea*, Hoſ. ii. he ſpeaks to his Church, and makes this Promiſe to her, *I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in Righteouſneſs, and in Judgement, and in Loving-kindneſs, and in Mercies:* From hence it is that this Church is called, *the Spouſe of the Lamb* in the *Revelations*; and, in the *Canticles*, the ſpiritual Union between Chriſt and his Church is expreſſed by a continual Alluſion to a Marriage between a Man and his Wife.

And becauſe our Meat and Drink are turned into our Body and Subſtance, Jeſus Chriſt aſſures us, *That his Fleſh is truly Meat, and his Blood is truly Drink; that he is the true Bread come down from Heaven, that gives Life to the World, and whoſoever ſhall eat him ſhall live for ever.*

But, among all the Similitudes borrowed to repreſent our Union with Jeſus Chriſt by his Holy Spirit, there is none employed more frequently in holy Scripture than that of the human Body; for there is not any more proper for us. All the Spirits that give Life and Motion proceed from the Head, and as ſoon as the Members are ſeparated from it, they die. In like Manner, the Spirit that quickens us, and makes us become new Creatures, proceeds from Jeſus Chriſt; ſo that whoſoever is ſeparated fr m his Head, he falls into Death, and eternal Deſtruction. And, as there are many Members, nevertheleſs they make up but one Body, becauſe they are all animated with the ſame Spirit, and they are kept alive by the ſame Head: So there be many Members belonging to Chriſt's myſtical Body, ſome in Combats yet upon Earth, and others glorified in Heaven; nevertheleſs, they make up but one only myſtical and ſpiritual Body; for they are quickened by the ſame Spirit, and receive all the celeſtial Influences from the ſame Head. St. *Paul* teacheth us this Doctrine, in expreſs Terms, 1 *Cor.* xii. *For as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body, being many, are one Body; ſo alſo is Chriſt; for by one Spirit*

Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. Finally, becauſe the ſame Spirit that is in our Lord, as in the Head and Fountain, and in the Church in general, as in the Body, which is quickened and moved, is alſo in every particular Member; the holy Apoſtle is not ſatisfied to call this ſpiritual Body of Chriſt, and his Church, Chriſt; but he tells us moreover, that whoſoever *is united unto him, is made but one Spirit with him.*

Theſe, and ſuch like Repreſentations, let them be never ſo lively and noble, are but dark Shadows, and imperfect Images, of our Union with Jeſus Chriſt by his Holy Spirit: For the richeſt and moſt magnificent Garment can never keep off from the Body Diſeaſes, nor hinder the Approaches of Corruption that creeps upon it. There is no Foundation ever ſo firm and well ſettled, that can free the Houſe built upon it from the Ruins and Breaches of Time and Weather. Although the Sap mounts up from the Root of the Vine, and runs into the Twigs and Branches, they wither at laſt, and are caſt into the Fire. The rareſt Meats, and the moſt delicious Drinks, can never make our Bodies become immortal; Death ſnatcheth away the Brother from the Brother, the Father from the Child, and the Wife from her Huſband. The Stroke of the Sword can ſeparate a Body from the healthieſt and ſtrongeſt Head; nay, without any ſuch Violence, the Head dies as well as the Body, and the Spirits that run in our Veins are far from hindering the Corruption of our Bodies; for they corrupt of themſelves, and vaniſh away. In ſhort, the ſtricteſt Unions of Nature and Art are diſſolved by Time, ſo that all Things under the Sun are ſubject to Vanity and Inconſtancy: But the Spirit of our Lord Jeſus is the Principle of an eternal Life, and the Seed of an incorruptible Glory. Whoſoever is united to him by this Spirit, nothing can ſeparate him from Chriſt, neither Life, nor Death, nor Hell, nor the World, nor Things

Things preſent, nor Things to come. Therefore our bleſſed Saviour could find nothing here upon Earth, nor amongſt all the Creatures, worthy and able to repreſent this perfect and inſeparable Union: He ſeeks an Image of it beyond all natural Beings, in the Holy Trinity; that unchangeable Union, which was, which is, and which ſhall ever be, between him and God the Father. As we may ſee in his excellent Prayer, *John* xvii. *Father, I pray for them all which ſhall believe in me, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be one in us, that they may be one, even as we are one.* Baniſh, therefore, from your Minds all Fear, believing Souls; for all the Three Perſons of the moſt Holy, moſt Glorious, and moſt Wonderful Trinity, are engaged for your Salvation, to bring you to your eternal Happineſs. The Father, by his infinite Wiſdom, hath found out a Means to reconcile us to himſelf, to ſatisfy his offended Juſtice, and to declare the Riches of his unparalleled Mercies: The Son hath purchaſed for us this great Salvation, by ſuffering the ſhameful Death of the Croſs, and by ſpilling his moſt precious Blood for the Forgiveneſs of our Sins: And the Holy Spirit, by incorporating us into Jeſus Chriſt, makes us Partakers of the infinite Merits of his Sufferings, *Rev.* iii. That is the true Hyſſop that ſprinkles the divine Blood of the Lamb, without Spot or Blemiſh, to cleanſe our Souls, *Heb.* xii. It is he that gives us the white Stone, where the new name of *Elect* and *Believer* is written, *Rev.* ii. which none knows but he that hath it: He gives to eat of the hidden *Manna*, and of the Food of Angels, *John* iv. which the World knoweth not. It is inſtead of a precious Ring or Jewel, by which our ſpiritual Bridegroom promiſes and confirms to us his conjugal Faith. It is the Seal of the living God, that ſeals to us the Covenant of Grace, and the Promiſes of Glory and Happineſs made to us in the Goſpel, as the Apoſtle himſelf tells us, *Eph.* i. that now having

ing believed the Goſpel of our Salvation, *we have been ſealed by the Spirit of Promiſe.* Therefore he exhorts us, *Epheſ.* iv. *not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom we have been ſealed for the Day of Redemption.* Finally, this is the Spirit that witneſſeth with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God: *If we be Children, we are Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* Rom. viii.

Think not, Chriſtian Souls, that I deſign to perſuade you, that this Holy Spirit of our Lord Jeſus ſhall come and whiſper in your Ears, or call unto you from within, that you are the Children of God, as the extravagant *Quakers* amongſt us imagine. The Teſtimony that he gives to our Spirits is a real and effectual Teſtimony, if I may ſo ſpeak; for he regenerates us, and makes us become new Creatures; he gives a more certain Aſſurance of his Adoption, than if he did declare from Heaven, *Thou art my Child, and thy Name is written in the Book of Life.* As the Seal imprints its Image in the Wax, thus the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus imprints in our Souls the Image of Holineſs and divine Virtue. Now, as the Figure that remains upon the Wax, makes us judge, without Diſpute, what Manner of Seal made the Impreſſion; likewiſe, when you find God's Image printed in your Hearts, acknowledge the Finger of God, and the Virtue of his Holy Spirit, who have been there: For none can have the bleſſed Image, but he muſt needs be the Child of God. The Holy Spirit, that gives it to our Souls, kindles in us the bleſſed Flames of holy Love, and produceth in us Tongues of Fire; he makes us ſpeak to God with Boldneſs, as to our Father, and lift up our Eyes to Heaven with Joy and Gladneſs, as to the Place of our Inheritance. All the Goodneſs of this preſent Life may be, nay, will be, loſt at laſt, *Prov.* xxiii. Riches take Wings, and fly away, like an Eagle; Honour

vaniſheth away, as Smoke carried away with the Wind; earthly Delights and Pleaſures haſte away as a Torrent, or the Waters of a River that ſlide along the Banks, and they end at laſt in a Sea of Bitterneſs and Sorrow. If by Chance theſe Vanities continue with the Worldlings, while they remain on Earth, *Pſal.* xlix. they can continue no longer; for they are ſtript of them at the Grave. Their Riches, and their Honours, are buried with them; and all their unſettled Delights fly away with their Breath. But Death hath no Power over this Spirit of Life, which is our true Treaſure and Glory, and everlaſting Delight.

Again, The true and lively Faith, that embraceth Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour, ſhall ceaſe; and Hope, that conſiders the Advantages to come, ſhall one Day be aboliſhed. While we are in this earthly Pilgrimage, we walk by Faith, and not by Sight; and while we are toſſed up and down upon this dangerous Sea of the World, *Heb.* vi. we have need of the Anchor of our Hope, and to expect with Patience the fulfilling of that we hope for, *Rom.* viii. But when we ſhall come to our Heavenly Country, we ſhall have no Need of a Staff to walk with, nor of a Shield to defend us, and to quench the fiery Darts of the Devil. When we ſhall be ſecure in the Haven of Eternity, we ſhall have no Occaſion to make uſe of this Anchor; for our Hope ſhall be changed into a perfect Fruition. When we ſhall be in Paradiſe, we ſhall need no Wings to carry us up to God, but only to fly about his Throne, as the Seraphims. In ſhort, we ſhall need no Looking-glaſs to ſee the Glory of God; for we ſhall behold him Face to Face. All that we believe at preſent without ſeeing, we ſhall then ſee, and believe no more. But the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, whom the World knoweth not, and cannot receive, is not given us for a Time, but to dwell in us for ever. As the Humanity, which our Lord took from us, was never caſt off, nor ever ſhall be; thus, the Spirit

rit, which he hath given us, ſhall never be taken from us. The Humanity which our Saviour united in the Perſon of the divine Word, hath been glorified by this eternal Union; but the Spirit which he hath united to our Spirits, by this gracious Union, is the Foundation of Glory, and of our eternal Happineſs.

This Spirit of Life is not only the Seal of the Promiſes of God, but alſo the Earneſt of our incorruptible Inheritance, reſerved for us in Heaven. This is St. *Paul's* Doctrine, *Epheſ.* i. for when he had ſaid, *You have been ſealed by the Holy Spirit of Promiſe*, he adds, *which is the Earneſt of our Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchaſed Poſſeſſion, unto the Praiſe of his Glory.* Becauſe this Divine Spirit is the Seal of the living God, he is the Earneſt of our Inheritance. For this heavenly Image that it imprints in our Souls, ſhall be Part of that Glory with which he will crown us in his holy Paradiſe. Therefore the Wiſdom that is Veracity in every Reſpect, doth not call this Spirit, a Pledge or Gage, but an Earneſt. For though both be given as a Confirmation of Promiſes, and an Aſſurance of their Accompliſhment, there is this Difference, that Men commonly take back again the Thing engaged, when that which is promiſed is done; but the Earneſt remains always, and is Part of the Sum to be paid. As therefore the Earneſt which is given, is never taken away, but Men commonly add to it the remaining Sum promiſed; likewiſe our Saviour never takes away from his Elect the Spirit of Adoption, which hath been once beſtowed upon them; but he increaſeth its Graces and Advantages, until he hath raiſed them to the higheſt Glory, and moſt divine Happineſs, which he hath promiſed.

It is in this Caſe, as with the Sun, which, as ſoon as it appears upon our Horizon, increaſeth the Light more and more, until it aſcends up to our Meridian:

Or, as the Streams and Rivers, which the farther they run, the more they increaſe, until they come to the Sea: Therefore, when our Lord and Saviour ſpeaks of this Spirit of Grace, which ſuch as believe in him receive, he tells the *Jews*, John vii. *He that believeth in me, Rivers of living Water ſhall flow from his Belly.* And to the *Samaritan* Woman he ſpeaks in this Language, *John* iv. *He that ſhall drink of the Water, that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt; but the Water, that I ſhall give him, ſhall become to him a Fountain of Water, ſpringing up to eternal Life.* This was ſometime ſhewn in a Viſion to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Ezek. xlvii. by the Waters that ran down from the Sanctuary; for, at the firſt, they reached no higher than the Prophet's Ankle-bones; afterwards they roſe up to his Knee, and then to his Middle; at laſt they increaſed in ſuch a Manner, that they became a great Torrent, and a deep River, which was not to be forded over, and which diſcharged itſelf into the Sea.

As *David*, in the Beginning of his Reign, commanded but one Tribe, but afterwards he enlarged the Limits of his Kingdom over all the Tribes of *Iſrael*, that ſmall Portion of the Kingdom was not then taken from him, but only increaſed, and became greater: Thus it is with us during this Life; we have a ſmall Part of the Kingdom of Heaven intruſted in our Hands; or, if I may ſo ſay, we have now ſome Jewels of the incorruptible Crown, which is promiſed hereafter. This Part ſhall not be taken from us, this bright Beam of our future Glory ſhall never be put out in the Life to come. We ſhall poſſeſs as much of this Kingdom as we are able, and ſhall be clothed with all the Light and Splendour of the heavenly Glory.

But as there is no compariſon ever ſo juſt, but is wanting in ſome Reſpects, there is no ſmall Dif-

ference in this; for the Tribe of *Judah* was the nobleſt and richeſt Part of the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, but that Part which our Souls enjoy at preſent, of the Happineſs and Glory of the Kingdom of Heaven, is but as a drop of Water, in Compariſon of the Ocean; or, as a weak Ray of Light, in Compariſon of the Sun, 2 *Cor.* xii. Therefore the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, who had been raviſhed into the third Heaven, and who knew better than any Man in the World, what were the Joys and Glories of Heaven, when he mentions this Spirit of Adoption that God ſends into our Hearts, he calls it, *Rom.* vii. *the Firſt-Fruits of his Spirit:* To teach us, that there is as vaſt a Difference between the Meaſure of the Gifts and Graces which we receive here below, and the overflowing Abundance which we ſhall enjoy in Heaven, as between ſome few Ears of Corn, and the whole Harveſt of a Field. It is like a ſmall Quantity of Fruits which were brought to the Children of *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, compared to the great Abundance of all the Land of *Canaan*. It is like ſome ſmall Crumbs of the heavenly Bread, of which we ſhall have our Fill in the Kingdom of God; or as ſome ſmall Drops of that new Wine which we ſhall drink for ever in the heavenly *Jeruſalem*.

Therefore, believing Souls, you may from hence conclude, that the Approaches of Death ought not to ſcare nor fright you; becauſe that you have within you the Principles of a Life everlaſting, and the Seeds of a glorious Immortality, which cannot be taken from you. Jeſus Chriſt does not only wait for you, and ſtretch out unto you his Arms to receive you into his Reſt; but he himſelf is alſo with you; and will render the Paſſage more eaſy and pleaſant to this new World, where Juſtice and Righteouſneſs dwell. He will work Miracles for your Sake, *John* xi. and if you believe, you ſhall

ſhall ſee the Glory of God, *Exod.* xix. We do not only follow the Footſteps of this divine and true *Joſhua*, but we paſs over with him, and he paſſeth over with us, *Joſhua* iii. We are not like the Children of *Iſrael*, that went through the River of *Jordan*, whilſt the Prieſts held the Ark in the Middle of the River; but we may be compared to the Prieſts themſelves, 1 *Pet.* ii. that did bear the Ark of the Covenant, and cauſed the Waters to return back to the Spring again. For we are a Generation of Prieſts, and we bear in our Souls the Lord Jeſus, in whom the Fulneſs of the Godhead dwells bodily, and in whom are hid all Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge. In ſhort, our Souls return to God, the Fountain from whence they came. Let therefore that heavenly Voice, which was heard in the *Holy Land*, ſound in our Ears, *Iſa.* xliii. *Fear not; for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy Name; thou art mine. When thou paſſeſt through the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee. When thou walkeſt through the Fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the Flame kindle upon thee.* And ſay with *David*, *When I ſhall walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I ſhall fear no Evil; for thou art with me; thy Staff and thy Rod ſhall comfort me*, Pſalm xxiii.

It ſeems the Primitive Chriſtians had a Deſign to ſhew us this Truth by the Picture of a Giant-like Man, wading through the Sea with a Staff in his Hand, and a Child upon his Shoulder. For this Giant is the Emblem of a Chriſtian, who lifts up his Mind as high as Heaven: The Sea ſignifies the Dangers of this World, and the Fears of Death: The Staff repreſents Faith, that keeps us up in our Paſſage through Life and Death, upon which, when we lean, we worſhip the living God of Heaven and Earth: And the Child is an Image of Chriſt:

Chriſt; therefore he that bears him is called *Chriſtophorus*, that is, *He that bears Chriſt*. *Cæſar* could not endure to ſee his Pilot tremble in a furious Storm at Sea, becauſe he was in his Boat. We have far leſs Reaſon to be afraid, ſince we carry in our Hearts the great Emperor and Monarch of the World, the Hope and Comfort of *Iſrael*. *Cæſar* was as much in Danger as his Pilot to make Shipwreck; but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath all the Winds at his Command: He can ſtill the moſt diſturbed Sea, and through the moſt terrible Death he can cauſe us to paſs and arrive at the ſafe Haven of eternal Reſt, and of a moſt happy and glorious Life.

When *David* ſhewed himſelf with a Purpoſe to fight with *Goliath*, he ſpoke to this dreadful *Philiſtine* in this Manner; *I come unto thee in the Name of the Lord of Hoſts, the God of the Armies of Iſrael.* But you, Chriſtian Souls, when you are to encounter with Death, you may ſay to it, not only I come to thee, in the Name of him who commands Legions of Angels, and all the Armies of immortal Spirits; but, I come to thee clothed with his Armour; ſtrengthened by his holy Spirit, and aſſiſted by him in Perſon. For Jeſus Chriſt, who has overcome Death for us, intends to overcome Death by us. We are the living Stones which he hath choſen of his wonderful Grace and Mercy, to bring down that proud inſulting Enemy, which cauſeth all Worldlings to tremble, and cover their Faces with Shame and Confuſion.

We have ſeen a *Samſon* breaking in Pieces, with an admirable Strength, the Cords with which he had been bound by the *Philiſtines*, *Judges* xvi. and tearing alſo the Body of a young Lion, in which he found, a few Days after, Honey moſt pleaſant to his Taſte. It will be much eaſier for us, when we ſhall be ſtrengthened with the divine Virtue of the Lord Jeſus, of whom *Samſon* was but a Type, to tear in Pieces all the Cords and Chains of Death. We ſhall rend in Pieces

the Body of this old Lion, and when we ſhall ſearch into his Bowels with a ſerious and repeated Meditation, we ſhall find the ſweeteſt and moſt raviſhing Comforts.

As when the Prophet *Elias* was carried up to Heaven in a fiery Chariot, he let fall his Cloak, with which *Eliſha* ſeparated the Waters of *Jordan*, ſo that he paſſed through the River on Foot; likewiſe our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, being aſcended up above the Clouds to the Throne of his Glory, hath left to us the Cloak of his Righteouſneſs; he hath granted us his Holy Spirit, that we might paſs through the turbulent Waves of the tempeſtuous Sea of this World, by its divine Virtue, and that through Death we might enter into immortal Life.

And as the Death of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſeparated his Soul from his Body, although his innocent Soul and holy Body remained always united perſonally to his Divinity; in the ſame Manner, the Believer's Death diſunites for a Time his Soul from his Body, but it can never ſeparate it from the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, that is the Soul of our Souls, and ſuch an holy Flame that it can never be extinguiſhed.

When the High-Prieſt of the *Jews* put off his prieſtly Ornaments, he caſt off at the ſame Time his Breaſt-plate, where the Names of the Twelve Tribes were engraven, *Exod.* xx. Not only our Names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, not only our Pictures are printed upon the Palms of his Hands with the Blood of the Covenant, but we are as a Signet upon his Heart, *Cant.* viii. ſo that we cannot be ſeparated from him, any more than his Heart can be taken from him. His Love is ſtronger than Death, and his Embraces are Embraces of Love.

Ruth promiſed to *Naomi*, that Death alone ſhould be able to ſeparate them, *Ruth* i. But on the contrary, we may tell our Lord and Saviour, who is our Father, Brother, and Huſband, Not only Death ſhall never be able

able to ſeparate us, but it rather ſhall bring us nearer to thee, and cauſe us to reſt in thy Boſom, where we ſhall be for ever ſatisfied with thine heavenly Delights. Chriſtians, you need not fear Death; for you are not to be wounded by all its Darts; for you have been dipped in the River that ſprings to eternal Life. The Spirit of the Lord Jeſus that is in you, is the Spirit of Life, the Beginning of Immortality, and the only Spring of eternal Glory and Happineſs. Since the Breath of the Prophet *Elias* raiſed a dead Body to Life, the Spirit and Breath of the Father and the Son will be able to keep your ſpiritual Life from decaying; unleſs it be in Death's Power to ſtop the Breath of the Almighty; unleſs it be able to limit the Beams of Light and Glory that come from his divine Countenance; unleſs it can cauſe the Rivers of living Water that ſpring out of his Throne, to ceaſe and dry up; it is not poſſible, that it ſhould cauſe us to periſh, and render us miſerable. Therefore you are certain of your eternal Happineſs, while Jeſus ſhall be the Author and Well-ſpring of Light, Life, Glory, and Immortality; and that his Holy Spirit ſhall be victorious over Death and Hell; and you may ſing with *David, I ſhall not die, but live, and declare the Works of the Lord,* Pſal. cxviii.

You are not only ſure of this Glory, and eternal Happineſs; and you are not only entered into Poſſeſſion of it by your Faith and Hope; but you begin already to enjoy it, and its Firſt-fruits. For he that believes in Jeſus Chriſt is paſſed from Death to Life, and whoſoever hath the Son of God, hath eternal Life. As the Prophet *Moſes*, when he was in the Wilderneſs, ſaw not only afar off the *Land of Promiſe*, but he taſted its delicious Fruits: Thus we do not only behold afar off, with the Eye of Faith, our celeſtial Inheritance; but we taſte, at preſent, and reliſh ſome of its bleſſed Delights. And as the Fruits brought by the Spies were the ſame, and like to them that the

Children of *Iſrael* fed upon in the *Promiſed Land*; in like Manner, the Fruits that we reliſh in the Wilderneſs of this World, are Fruits of the Tree of Life, with which we ſhall be fully ſatisfied in Heaven. For the Grace that God beſtows upon us here below, by his Divine Spirit, is the Beginning of Glory, with which he ſhall crown us above. The ſame Light that ſhines upon our Souls on Earth, ſhall ſhine brighter for ever in Heaven. But whereas we look upon it, at preſent, as it were, through a black Miſt, with much Imperfection; then we ſhall ſee it clearly without Veil or Darkneſs. The ſame Holineſs that adorns at preſent our Souls, ſhall be their Ornament and Glory; then it ſhall appear without Spot or Blemiſh. That ſame Peace of Conſcience that preſerves our Hearts and Senſes, ſhall be without the leaſt Diſturbance. In ſhort, the ſame Jeſus that is conceived in our Hearts, and that is formed and grown in us by Degrees, ſhall then appear in a perfect Stature, that ſhall want no more Increaſe.

As it is with the Sea, it enters into the Rivers before the Rivers can run to the Sea; in like Manner, God comes to us before we go to him; and Heaven enters into our Souls before we can enter into Heaven.

Aged *Simeon* waited patiently for Death; but as ſoon as he had ſeen the Saviour of the World, and embraced him, he ran to meet Death. He thought upon nothing but his latter End; therefore he prayed to God moſt earneſtly to receive him into his glorious Reſt. O Chriſtian Soul, how ſhouldeſt thou diſpoſe and prepare thyſelf to die, ſince thou beholdeſt with the Eyes of Faith, this bleſſed Redeemer, not wrapped up in Swaddling-clothes, but crowned with an infinite Glory and Light! He is not in thine Arms, but he lodges in thine Heart; thou haſt not received him, to return, or part with him again, but to be united to him for ever, and to be incorporated into his myſtical Body. Since therefore Death brings

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thee the nearer to thy Redeemer, perfects this bleſſed Union, and caſts thee into the very Fountain of Life; inſtead of being frightened at it, and grieved when it comes to thee, thou ſhouldeſt then rejoice, and be tranſported above Meaſure with Gladneſs. We ſhould meet this Death with a chearful Countenance: I mean, that we ſhould meet the Lord Jeſus, this merciful Prince of Life, who, having vouchſafed to thee the Sight of his Salvation, intends to receive thee into his Reſt, and glorious Peace, who reigns above in Heaven.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Chriſtian Soul which arms itſelf againſt the Fears of Death, by meditating on our ſtrict and inſeparable Union with Jeſus Chriſt, by his Holy Spirit, and the Firſt-fruits in us of our bleſſed Immortality.

O Mighty and Merciful Lord, the Son of Righteouſneſs, and Fountain of living Water, drive away from me the dark Shadow of Death, and quench all the Fires that it kindles in my Soul. Thou haſt not only died for me, but thou art pleaſed to live in me, that I might one Day live for ever with thee. Thou haſt, of thy pure Mercy, choſen me for thy Child, and haſt made me a Member of thy myſtical Body, Fleſh of thy Fleſh, Bone of thy Bone, and cauſed me to be a Partaker of thine Holy Spirit. God has given thee the Spirit without Meaſure, that of thy Fulneſs we might receive Grace for Grace. By the means of this bleſſed and infinite Spirit that abides in my Soul, I am united to thee in a more perfect Manner, than the Tree is to the Root that bears it, or the Child to its Mother

that nouriſheth it in her Womb, or the Members of the human Body to the Head that gives them Life. Ties that unite me unto thee, O glorious Saviour, are more unchangeable than the Heavens and the Earth: As nothing can pluck me out from thine Hand, there is nothing can ſeparate me from thine Heart. Whether I live or die, I am thine, my Lord and my God, and nothing can alter thine Affection for me. Death can take me out of the World, and carry me out of the Embraces of my deareſt Friends; but it can never ſeparate me from thine Holy Spirit, the Soul of my Soul, and the Light of my Life, which cannot be put out by all the envious Blaſts and Storms of the Prince of Darkneſs; but it will rather bring me nearer to behold thy Face, to reſt in thy Boſom, and unite me to thee more perfectly for ever. To whom ſhall I go? Thou haſt the Words of eternal Life, and art the inexhauſtible Fountain. Thou art my Hope, and my Treaſure, my Glory, and mine only Happineſs. O faithful and unqueſtionable Witneſs! I ſhould be worſe than an Infidel, if I queſtioned my future Salvation and Glory, ſince the Father hath not ſpared thee for me, though thou art his only beloved Son, the Brightneſs of his Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon; ſince thou, O merciful Lord, haſt willingly ſuffered the moſt ſhameful Death of the Croſs, and ſpilt thy precious Blood to waſh away my Sins, and ſatisfy for my Crimes; and ſince thine Holy Spirit is come into mine Heart, to make me a Partaker of that precious Blood, and ſeal me for the Day of Redemption. O glorious Spirit of my Saviour, that reſts upon me! when I ſhall be able to ſpeak the Language of Angels, I ſhall not ſufficiently expreſs the wonderful Operations that thou produceſt in my Soul. Thou kindleſt in me ſuch heavenly Flames, as never go out, but are always alive, as the Fire of thine Altar. Thou formeſt in me a white Stone, where a new Name is written, which no Man knows but he that receives it. Thou giveſt me to eat of that hidden Manna, of that Food of Angels, that the World knoweth not. Thou witneſſeſt with my Spirit, that I am a Child and Heir of God,

God, and joint-heir with Jeſus Chriſt the King of Kings. Thou doſt not only ſeal me the Pardon of all my Sins, but doſt alſo purify my Conſcience from all dead Works to ſerve the living God. Thou cauſeſt me to cry out Abba, Father; *and imprinteſt in my Heart the glorious Image of my heavenly Father. Thou art the Seal of my Adoption, the Earneſt of mine incorruptible Inheritance, prepared for me in Heaven. Thou haſt given me the infallible Aſſurances of a glorious and eternal Life, and begun it already in my Soul, granting me its Firſt-fruits. Thou cauſeſt me to behold the Sun-ſhine of thy Grace, and makeſt it to give Light in mine Underſtanding. Thou doſt not only vouchſafe me the Favour of beholding from this Valley of Tears thine heavenly* Canaan, *but cauſeſt me to taſte of its fruits. I am not yet come to the Fountains of Waters that ſpring forth to eternal Life; but I taſte the Streams and Rivers that flow in me. I am not yet in thine holy Paradiſe, but thou haſt cauſed Paradiſe to be in me; thou haſt given to me an unſpeakable and glorious Joy, and haſt beſtowed upon me the Grace of God that paſſeth all Underſtanding. O living and quickening Spirit, unknown to the World! Thou ſtrengtheneſt me in ſuch a Manner, that Death ſhall never be able to fright me. Thou haſt united me to thyſelf by an inſeparable Union, O Prince of Life; and haſt put me in a State of Immortality, an infallible Principle of Glory, and a Source of unſpeakable Happineſs: Thou art in me to dwell with me for ever; therefore thou ſhalt fill up the Meaſure of thy moſt ſignal Favours. My Faith, by thy divine Aſſiſtance, hath ſpied out the Kingdom prepared for me from the Beginning of the World; and ſhortly, I ſhall ſee with mine Eyes the inexpreſſible Beauties of that celeſtial Country, that flows with the Milk of the pureſt and ſincereſt Joys, and with the Honey of the ſweeteſt and moſt raviſhing Comforts. Thou haſt ſent a Fore-taſte of the Fruits of the Tree of Life; but I ſhall come into thine heavenly Paradiſe; I ſhall ever have my Fill of thoſe delicious Fruits. Now, thou haſt*

caused some Drops of the Dew of Heaven to fall upon mine Heart; but then thou wilt make me drink of the Rivers of thy divine Pleasures. At present, in my painful Passage, in the Midst of my Groans and Tears, I may gather some Ears; but when I come to my heavenly Country, I shall reap my Hands full with Songs of Joy. Here upon Earth I see God as in a Glass, obscurely; but in Heaven I shall behold him Face to Face, and I shall be satisfied with his Likeness. My Lord and my God, who, by the infinite Merits of thy Sufferings, hast purchased for us this Spirit of Life, and who hast given to my Soul such an authentick Seal of my Salvation, and such a precious Earnest of thine eternal Bliss; I feel in me the Motions and Endeavours of this new Man, that strives to leave this Body of Darkness and Death, to enter into the Light of the Living. Lord Jesus, since thou hast granted me the Spirit of thy Grace, enlightened my Soul with thy divine Knowledge, and caused me to know the Way of Life; since thou hast given me to taste of the heavenly Gift of the Powers of the Life to come; and hast vouchsafed to me the First-fruits of thy Glory; and that I already feel Heaven in my Soul; since I behold thee with the Eyes of my Faith, I embrace thee with all my Affections, and that thou dwellest in my Heart; perfect in me the Work of thy Grace, and bring me at last to thy eternal Glory. Lord, now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in Peace; for mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation. *Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

The Eighth Conſolation *is, to conſider that Death delivers us from all temporal Evils, that we daily ſuffer.*

THERE are certain Pictures with two Faces; the one repreſents moſt ugly Features, and the other beautiful and pleaſant Things. This is the true Emblem of Death; for it may be painted with a fearful Countenance, a lean Body, and Iron Hands, that raviſh us from our Goods, and our Honours; and that divide our Perſons, dragging our Bodies into a loathſome Sepulcher. If we look upon Death in this Manner, we cannot but tremble and fear. We may alſo look upon it as a powerful Deliverer, that unlooſeth all our Fetters, breaks our Chains to Pieces, raiſes our Souls to the higheſt Glory and Happineſs. If we conſider it thus, there is nothing more lovely than Death, and nothing more to be deſired.

I have hitherto endeavoured to ſhew how a Believer ſhall ſtrengthen and comfort himſelf againſt the Fears of Death; but now I ſhall add ſomething more, with Heaven's Aſſiſtance. I ſhall labour to prove, not only that Death is to be expected without Apprehenſion, but to be received with an holy Joy; that it is not at all dreadful, but rather is to be earneſtly deſired. I ſhall no longer give, to ſpeak properly, any Conſolations againſt the Fears of Death; for I hope to make it plain, that Death itſelf is to be looked upon as the greateſt Conſolation and Comfort.

That I may attain my Purpoſe, I ſhall ſhew, as in a Picture, a ſhort View of all the dreadful Miſeries, from

from which Death delivers us; and then I ſhall endeavour to paint out in the brighteſt Colours, or rather I ſhall chalk out unto you, the Bleſſedneſs and Glories into which it uſhers us.

Man's Life and Miſery are Twin-ſiſters that are born at the ſame Time, and own *Adam* for their firſt Parent; they die together at the ſame Inſtant in true Believers. We all know, that Man begins his Life weeping and crying, and ends with Sighs and Groans. We come into the World all covered with Blood, and we go out covered all over with a cold Sweat. If the Child cries not ſo ſoon as it is born, we judge that it is dead; and when the ſick Body ceaſes to groan and ſigh, we ſay, that he is paſt Hopes. So that our crying is a Token of Life, and the End of our Sighs is likewiſe an infallible Sign of our Death. Wretched Man! how miſerable is thy Condition! Thy beſt Friends rejoice at thy Crying, and they weep and lament when thou ceaſeſt to ſigh and groan.

All the reſt of thy Time between the Cradle and thy Grave is no happier. It is but a continued Chain of Miſery, a Mixture of Pains, a Succeſſion of Evils, and a Sea of Bitterneſs. As one Wave falls upon the Back of another, one Evil is no ſooner gone, but another follows and threatens us. One Depth calleth another, and all Manner of Floods and Storms paſs over our Heads. As the Sparks riſe out of the Fire to fly up, Man is born for Miſery and Pain, *Job* v. and as the wiſeſt of Kings ſpeaks, *His Days are nothing but Pain, and his Employments but Trouble; in the Night his Heart reſteth not*, Eccleſ. iii. There are ſcarce any Dwellings but Meſſengers of ill News arrive at them ſometimes, as they did to that of *Job*, Chap. i.

By God's unchangeable Order and Appointment the Days ſucceed the Nights, and divide the Year into two equal Parts. For if the Nights are longer in

in one Seaſon, ſo much the ſhorter they are in another. But the Nights of our Afflictions are ſo long, that they ſeem to laſt ſeveral Ages; whereas the Days of Proſperity are ſo ſhort, that they are gone in a Moment. So that we may juſtly ſay with the Prophet *Moſes*, *The beſt of our Days are but Labour and Sorrow; ſo ſoon doth our Life paſs away, and we are gone*, Pſal. xc. It is as eaſy a Taſk to number the Stars of the Firmament, and to reckon up the Grains of the Sand upon the Sea-ſhore, as to make an exact Examination of all the Evils that happen to us as Men belonging to a civil Society, or as Members of God's Church, and his adopted Children. Therefore old *Jacob* had Cauſe to complain, that the Years of his Life had been ſo ſhort and evil; but ours are ſo evil, that they cannot be too ſhort.

I ſhould compoſe many Volumes, if I ſhould undertake to deſcribe perfectly all the Infirmities and Diſeaſes that undermine the Body, all the cutting Pains, and cruel Tortures, that torment and rack us.

The moſt languiſhing Sickneſſes, and the moſt violent Pains, that afflict and diſturb this Body, are nothing in Compariſon of the exceſſive Sadneſs and mortal Anguiſh, that ſeize upon our Souls, and fill them full of Gall and Bitterneſs. I think there is no Man upon Earth that can boaſt of having paſſed but one Day without ſome Diſpleaſure, either inward or outward. For we either feel preſent Evils, that ſtrike through our Hearts as ſo many Darts, or the Remembrance of former Griefs trouble us, or elſe the Fears of future Miſchiefs vex and fret us. I may juſtly ſay, that the Devil is not ſo cruel to himſelf, as we are to our own Perſons; for this evil Spirit cares not to be tormented before the Time, whereas we anticipate the Evils by unquiet Apprehenſions, and wilful Vexations entertained in our Minds. The Fear of Miſery makes us far more miſerable; and the Apprehenſion

sion of an imaginary Evil causeth us to resent a real Affliction, and an unfeigned Torment.

When we consider any Man's Life, we only look upon that which appears most delightful and pleasant. We consider the Nobility of his Blood, the Variety of his Pleasures, the Greatness of his Riches, the Glory of his Offices and Victories, and the Pomp of his Triumphs. But scarce any Man takes Notice of his Miseries and Afflictions; or, if some be so observed, they are but such as are too obvious to every Man's Eye; as the publick Affronts and Disgraces, the Loss of a Battle, the Degradation from an Office, Banishments, Imprisonments, and such-like unhappy Afflictions. But, besides these Calamities, which are visible to all the World, and the common Motives of the condoling Lamentations of our Friends, there are many secret Evils, that be far more painful. Our nearest Relations discover not always our most sensible Wounds, to pour into them an healing Balm; they seek not our deepest Sorrows, nor do they dream of applying to our Souls the most proper Comforts.

When you behold Stage-players capering upon a Theatre, speaking as big as Kings and Princes, you seldom think, that, under their magnificent and glorious Attire, they hide many filthy Rags, and perhaps, some incommodious Vermin, that sting them to the quick. Thus when you cast your Eyes upon Riches, Glory, Pomp, and the Magnificence of worldly Men, you do not discover and see the Canker-worm that gnaws their Hearts, and the secret Fire that devours their Souls. Some there be, that laugh in publick before Company, and appear with a merry Countenance, who are full of Despair, and in private tear off their Hair, sigh, and pour forth Abundance of Tears. Some feed themselves before the World with the most delicious Meats and drink the rarest Wines; but inwardly they are glutted with Poison and Gall. This was the

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Conſideration of the wiſeſt of Kings, when he writ this Sentence, *I have ſaid of Laughter, It is mad; and of Gladneſs, What profiteth it?* Eccleſ. ii. 2.

As Poverty and a mean Eſtate are never without a Train of fretful Sorrows and Cares; likewiſe Riches and Honour are never without Fears and Diſturbances. And as there is no Flame ever ſo pure, but ſends up a Smoke, nor a Roſe ſo beautiful, but has its Prickles; ſo there is no Condition ſo ſplendid or glorious, nor any Proſperity ſo flouriſhing, but hath its Troubles and ſharp Thorns. Every Man upon Earth (without Exception) bears his Croſs, or hath a grievous Thorn in his Side. The Moth ſticks to the richeſt Stuffs; the Worm gets into the Heart of the faireſt Flowers and Fruits; and the Thunderbolt ſtrikes down the loftieſt Oaks, the higheſt Steeples, and the moſt magnificent Palaces: Likewiſe Care and Grief commonly eat up the Flower of the greateſt Proſperities; and the nobleſt Dignities are often ſubject to the ſtrangeſt Alterations, and to the moſt terrible Downfalls. The richeſt Crowns caſt all their Splendor and Glory outwardly; but inwardly they are felt to be weighty upon the Heads of ſuch as bear them. A great Prince found his Diadem ſo burdenſome and unſufferable, that he cried out, *O Crown! if thy Weight were well known, none would lift thee up from the Ground.* It is not without a good Cauſe, that ſuch as are paſſionate for the World and inclinable to the Delights of the Fleſh, are in a continual Fear and Dread; for they be expoſed to the moſt imminent Dangers. If their Eyes were open, they would ſee a naked Sword always hanging over their Heads. As in that Statue which *Nebuchadnezzar* ſaw in his Dream, the Head that was of pure Gold was as eaſily broken as the earthen Feet, and became as light as the Chaff which the Wind carries away: Likewiſe the moſt honourable, the richeſt, and the moſt glorious Eſtate, is equally ſubject to the ſame Miſchances,

Miſchances, as the loweſt, the pooreſt, and the moſt wretched. Where are any Riches and Treaſures, that are not ſucceeded by Poverty? Where rides that Pride and Pomp, that hath not Shame to attend it? Is there any Grandeur in the Age not ſubject to the furious Blaſts of Envy? Where is that lighted Taper, that a Whirlwind and a Storm of Rain cannot put out? Chriſtian Souls, take good Notice of the Fruits which the World gives to its Servants and Children, and you ſhall find that they are much like to certain Apples of *America*, of an excellent Beauty, and of a ſweet Smell; yet they are full of the rankeſt Poiſon, that kills infallibly ſuch as unadviſedly eat of them. There is no Sweetneſs ſo great upon Earth, but hath a Mixture of Bitter; nor Joy ſo pure and laſting, but is often interrupted with Sighs and Tears. The rareſt Pleaſures have a ſad Countenance, and a groaning Aſpect. Our Hearts, in the Midſt of Laughter, feel an Oppreſſion, and our Joy is accompanied with Sorrow. Therefore, when the moſt experienced of all former Princes had taken exact Notice of all Things under the Sun, and taſted all the Delights of Life, he concludes with this Confeſſion, *That all Things under the Sun are nothing but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.*

It is not needful, that I ſhall make here an exact and particular Deſcription of all the ſad and troubleſome Accidents of Life, that are able to turn the moſt flouriſhing Eſtate upſide down. Remember, ingenuous Reader, to run over carefully the whole Courſe of thy Life, and examine in the juſt Scales of the Sanctuary, all the good and evil Things which thou haſt found by Experience. In one put all the Satisfactions of the Fleſh, and whatſoever brings thee any Advantage or Content; and put in the other all thy fretful Cares, Griefs, Diſpleaſures, and Diſgraces. If thine Evils and Miſeries weigh

weigh not down the Balance, thou mayeſt eſteem it a Wonder, and a Miracle. Thou haſt no Cauſe to boaſt of thy earthly Happineſs. Mind well the Speech of *Solon*, one of the wiſeſt Men of *Greece*, to *Cræſus*, a Prince puffed up with his Riches and Proſperity; *That none could be eſteemed happy before his latter End, and the Hour of his Death.* Conſider, that ſome who have attained to a greater Degree of Happineſs than thou haſt, have fallen into a moſt wretched State on a ſudden. He, who lately abounded in Wealth and Plenty, is reduced oft-times to the loweſt Poverty. He, who had whole Armies at his Command, is ſometimes forſaken of all the World. He, who had Princes for his Subjects, is oft-times forced to obey a Slave. Some that fed daintily, are glad to eat the Bread of Affliction, and to quench their Thirſt with Tears. Some who lately flouriſhed in gorgeous Apparel, and Palaces adorned with Gold and Silver, are now rotting in a loathſome Dungeon. Some are dragged from their magnificent Dwellings to the moſt infamous Death. The richeſt and nobleſt Crowns have not protected the wiſeſt Heads.

When it ſhould be poſſible to go through this Life without feeling any Alteration in thine Health, nor ſuffering any Loſs of Goods, nor Change of thy happy Condition, which is as rare a Thing to be found as a ſtrange Bird called a *Phœnix*; haſt thou no Children, Parents, nor Friends, whom thou loveſt, or oughteſt to love tenderly? Are thoſe Perſons without any Affliction? And is it not poſſible, that it ſhould ſeize upon them? Certainly, unleſs thou haſt an Heart as inſenſible as Marble and Steel, unleſs thou haſt renounced all natural Affections, thou muſt needs be moved with theſe Evils and Diſgraces that happen to them in their Life; and when Death ſnatcheth them away, it muſt needs tear thy very Heart, and rend thy Bowels.

But

But if it ſhould happen (which is impoſſible), that nothing hath ever afflicted thee in thine own Perſon, or in that of thy Friends, and if all ſuch as are related to thee live in perfect and flouriſhing Proſperity, like to thoſe Countries of the other World, that are always covered with Flowers and Fruits; caſt thine Eyes upon the Earth, and thou ſhalt there behold ſo many Evils and Calamities, that if thou haſt any Senſe of Humanity, thou ſhalt have Cauſe to weep. God commmanded the Prophet *Jeremiah* to deliver the Cup of his Wrath to ſeveral People, one after another; but now it ſeems, that he delivers this Cup to them all at once. For, where is that People or Nation, that may boaſt of never having drunk of it, and of not being in Danger of drinking? Some have drank it up to the very Dregs, others drink it by Degrees, others have this bitter Cup brought to their Lips.

Our Saviour cauſeth his beloved Diſciple to ſee two Angels, who had each of them in his Hand a ſharp Sickle to reap the Corn, and gather the Grapes, *Rev.* xiv. Afterwards he diſcovered to him ſeven more, who had in their Hands golden Phials full of the Wrath of God, which they poured upon the Inhabitants of the World, to plague and puniſh them, *Rev.* xv. But at preſent, the holy Angels appear in Troops and Legions to cut off Mankind, and to tranſport them to the Wine-preſs of God's eternal Vengeance. The Wrath of God ſeems no more to be meaſured out by Phials, nor by Cups; but it overflows as a great River, and a bottomleſs Sea, that ſwells and runs over the Banks and the Shore. In ſhort, the Deluge of Evils that cover the Face of the Earth, is ſo univerſal, that the Doves, I mean the innocent and meek Souls, that love Peace and Reſt, can find no Place to fix and ſettle their Feet.

If

If thou haſt any Chriſtian Zeal and Charity to increaſe thy Senſe of Humility, thou canſt not poſſibly behold with unconcerned Affections, the deſpicable and dangerous State of Chriſt's Church on Earth. For it is like *Noah's* Ark in the Midſt of the roaring Waves, like the burning Buſh of Mount *Oreb* ſurrounded with Flames, like the Prophet *Daniel* in the Lion's Den, and like his Companions in the fiery Furnace; ſo that it may juſtly ſpeak in the ſame Manner as the ancient *Jeruſalem*, *Is it nothing to all you that paſs by? Behold, and ſee if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the Day of his fierce Anger*, Lam. i. O bleſſed Church of God, thou haſt felt Perſecution from thine Infancy until now, *Pſal.* cxix. Prepare therefore thyſelf to ſuffer much more in this Decay and Old-age of the World; for the Devil will perſecute thee with ſo much the more Fury and Violence, becauſe he knows he has but a ſhort Time, and muſt ſoon be ſhut up in the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone.

In this Caſe, Grief is not only lawful, but commanded; for God requires us to put on Sackcloth and Aſhes, *Iſa.* xxii. He deſires that we ſhould be ſick for the Troubles of *Joſeph*, *Amos* vi. That we ſhould weep with them that weep, *Rom.* xii. That we ſhould remember the Priſoners, as if we were Priſoners with them; and that we ſhould ſuffer with them that are tormented, as being Members of one Body, *Heb.* xii. We have good Reaſon to apply to the World, and to the Worldlings, *David's* Saying, *Woe is me that I ſojourn in Meſech, that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar! My Soul hath long dwelt with them that hate Peace*, Pſal. cxx. *Jeremiah* had never ſo much Cauſe as we to lament, and to wiſh that his Head were diſſolved into Water, and his Eyes were a Fountain of Tears, to weep Day and Night, *Jer.* ix. And the Prophet *Iſaiah* had never ſo much Reaſon to cry out in the Diſpleaſure of his Soul, *Look away from me, I will weep*

bitterly, labour not to comfort me; because of the Spoiling of the Daughter of my People, Isa. xxii.

It is not therefore without good Cause that the Preacher acquaints us, *That the Day of Death is far better than the Day of our Birth*; for our Birth causeth us to weep, and Death wipes off all Tears from our Eyes. Our Birth discovers that large Theatre upon which all worldly Tragedies are acted; Death draws the Curtain, and puts a Period to all such bloody Scenes. Our Birth casts us into the Fire and Water of divers Afflictions; and Death draws us out of those Flames and Bitterness. Finally, since our Life is but a Chain of Misery, and that Death breaks in Pieces the last Link; since our Life is but a continual Fighting, and that Death alone is the Victory; it is most certain, that Death is not to be feared as an Evil, and an Enemy, but rather to be desired as a good Friend, and a Blessing. It is reported of the *Thracians*, that they buried their Dead with Expressions of Joy; and the Inhabitants of the *Fortunate Islands* sung and danced at the Funerals of their dearest Friends. I do not commend these foolish Examples of extravagant and barbarous People, who were without Hope, and without God in the World. Such cannot fear Death too much; for, if it freed them from some present and light Evil, it cast them into an Abyss of excessive Torments. Death is an Happiness, it brings with it a solid Comfort and Joy; but it is when we die in God's Favour, and in the Faith of our Lord Jesus. God hath sufficiently declared the Happiness and Pleasure of his Children's Death; for he often abridges the Days of those whom he favours and esteems. Because he had seen some good Thing in the Person of *Abijah*, the eldest Son of *Jeroboam*, King of *Israel*, he took him away in the Flower of his Age, 1 *Kings* xiv. He granted the same Favour to *Josias*, King of *Judah*, one of the most religious Princes in the World; for he had declared to him, by *Haldah* the Prophetess, *Behold, I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou shalt*

be

be gathered into thy Grave in Peace; and thine Eyes ſhall not ſee all the Evil which I will bring upon this Place, 2 Kings xxii. It is not to be doubted, but that ſuch are moſt happy that die in the Lord, and reſt from their Labours; but I judge them happy in a two-fold Manner, that die, or rather ceaſe from dying, in ſuch miſerable Times, ſo full of Confuſion and Diſorder.

Would you not laugh at a Workman, that ſhould grieve when his Taſk is ended, and his Labour finiſhed? Or, at a Way-faring Man, who ſhould lament to ſee the End of his painful Journey through Prickles and Thorns, and the ſcorching Heat of the Sun, or the inſufferable Cold of the Winter? Or, would you not wonder at one that ſhould vex himſelf when he is ſafely arrived in the Haven, eſcaped the Waves of a tempeſtuous Sea, and in a Shelter from the Storms? Wretched Man! Thou art far more fooliſh and extravagant than thoſe of whom we ſpeak; for the moſt painful Labours of a Workman, the moſt grievous Wearineſs of a tedious Journey, and the ſwelling Waves of a troubled Sea, are nothing in Compariſon of the Labours, Miſery, and Troubles of this languiſhing Life. You would, doubtleſs, eſteem it a very great Folly and Madneſs in a Priſoner, to be ſorry for being delivered out of his noiſome Dungeon; or in a Galley ſlave, to be angry when he is to be looſed from his Chains; or in an Offender, to vex when he is freed from his Torments. What think ye? Is there leſs Madneſs and Extravagancy in you, when ye are grieved to ſee Death freeing your Souls from this miſerable Body, where it is impriſoned, withdrawing it from the painful Employments of this unhappy Age, more grievous and intolerable than that of the Galley-ſlaves, and diſcharging you from the Troubles of the Soul, far more painful than the moſt inſufferable Tortures of the Body? No, no; Death, that thou dreadeſt ſo much, is not the Death of the Faithful, but the End of his Miſeries, and the laſt Period

of all his Torments. *Noah*, *Gen.* viii. when he went out of the Ark that ſtopped upon Mount *Ararat*, had never ſo much Cauſe to praiſe God, and to offer to him the Sacrifice of Thankſgiving, as we have, when he is pleaſed to cauſe us to ſee the End of the Inundation of ſo many Evils and Calamities, and to make this floating Life, or this living Death, to ſtop upon Mount *Sion*.

The Children of *Iſrael* ſang Songs of Thankſgiving when they came out of *Egypt*, and ſaw themſelves delivered out of a bitter and painful Bondage; where they had been employed in gathering Stubble, and burning of Brick: But we have much more Cauſe to rejoice, and to ſing Songs of Praiſe, when Death takes us out of the World, where we ſuffer a Kind of Bondage, labouring in vain, and enduring the ſcorching Heat of many Afflictions that conſume us. Thou findeſt Fault with ſome of that inconſtant People, who murmured to return again into *Egypt*, when they were upon the Borders of the *Promiſed Land*; but rather find Fault with thine own filthy Fleſh, if it offers to murmur and revolt, when thou art at the Entrance of thy celeſtial *Canaan*. *Joſeph* rejoiced when the King of *Egypt* ſent for him out of Priſon, *Gen.* xiv. And have we not Cauſe to be joyful, when God ſends for our Souls out of the World, and cauſeth them to go out of their Bodies, which to them is a Kind of a Dungeon?

If therefore we can ſpeak without impatient Murmuring, I conceive we have as good Reaſon as *Jonas*, to ſay, *O Lord, take, I beſeech thee, my Life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live*, Jonas iv. Or, as the Prophet *Elias*, *It is enough, Lord, take away my Life*, 1 Kings xix. Such a Soul may, in an holy Tranſport, ſafely ſpeak in the Language of *David*, the Man after God's own Heart, *Bring my Soul out of Priſon, that I may praiſe thy Name. The Righteous ſhall compaſs me about; for thou ſhalt deal bountifully with me*, Pſal. cxli.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Chriſtian, who comforts himſelf with the Conſideration, that Death delivers us from temporal Evils, without Number, which ſo often aſſault us.

O Glorious Prince of my Salvation! Thou haſt hitherto ſtrengthened me againſt all Fears of Death; but now I heartily beſeech thee to afford me ſuch Grace, that Death may not terrify nor afflict me, but fill me full of Joy and Comfort. Suffer me not to follow the Example of the Iſraelites, *who, forgetting the Hardſhips of their former Bondage, and minding only the Pleaſures and Plenty of* Egypt, *mutinied to return back from the Borders of* Canaan. *Let not the Delights of this World, nor the fleſhly Luſts, poſſeſs my Soul; but grant that I may ſo mind the Labours and Miſeries of this preſent State, that as a Workman, contented to ſee Night put an End to his Toil; or as a Traveller, either by Sea or Land, willingly enters the Haven or Inn, where he is to reſt; I may look upon Death in the ſame favourable Manner; and the rather, becauſe of the terrible Confuſions, the Calamities, Streams of Blood, and Miſchiefs of War, of Fire and Sword, that threaten and devour us. The lamentable State of thy diſtreſſed Church chiefly affects me; this is like a ſmall Boat in the Midſt of roaring and ſwelling Waves, ready to ſink, were it not for thy powerful Protection, who commandeſt the boiſterous Element; or like* Daniel *in the Lion's Den, in Danger to be devoured, didſt thou not defend it from the furious Beaſts. I am weary to behold ſo many bloody Tragedies acted, to continue ſo long in a World of Wickedneſs, and to be an Eye-witneſs of the Sufferings, and to hear the Complaints of thy choſen People. O heavenly Father, I am contented to be freed from this Chain of Miſery, from this Life, where ſo many Calamities oppreſs and afflict me; Calamities of Sickneſs, and Diſtempers that torment my Body; and of other Afflictions, of which I am ſenſible. When wilt thou releaſe me, O my God, from this Priſon*

and dark Dungeon, that thy blessed Angel may convey my Soul to a better State, out of the Reach of the Devil's Malice and Power! When wilt thou send for me to introduce me into thy celestial Jerusalem, *where I shall, with the rest of thy Chosen, glorify thee, my God, and forget all my former Sorrows, that shall be swallowed up in everlasting Joy, where no Pain nor Grief shall ever come near us, but shall be secured by thy divine Presence from the Sense and Apprehension of all Evil, and be put in Possession of an everlasting Happiness?* Amen.

CHAP. XXI.

The Ninth Consolation; *Death shall deliver us from Sin, which we may see reigning in the World, and from the Remains of our Corruption.*

WHEN God sent Angels from Heaven to fetch *Lot* out of *Sodom*, and secure him from the Flames with which he intended to destroy that abominable City, this good Man's Wife could not forbear looking back; but she was, in that very Moment, sufficiently punished, by being turned into a Pillar of Salt, the Emblem of that holy Prudence, that this Example recommends to Posterity. That which made this unhappy Woman break the Angel's express Command, was her Affection for the Riches, Plenty, and Pleasures of that Country, which she had left; not thinking upon the Baseness, Filth, and abominable Vices, that brought God's Wrath and Vengeance upon the unworthy Inhabitants. Likewise, when God intends to take us out of the World, and to secure us from the Sense of his dreadful Judgements; that which causeth us to look back, and hinders us from following the Angels that God sends to us, to lead us up to the Mountain of our Salvation, is, that we think upon nothing but the Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of this wretched World, instead

inſtead of conſidering the Iniquities that reign here below, wherewith we are defiled, while we continue in this corrupted Fleſh.

Chriſtian Souls, will you prepare yourſelves to go to God? And do you wiſh, that Death would comfort and rejoice your Hearts, inſtead of afflicting them? Caſt your Eyes upon thoſe dreadful Vices that are ſo common, under which the whole Creation groans as under an heavy Burden. O good God! In what Age are we born! An Age like that of *Noah*; for all the Earth hath corrupted its Way, *Gen.* v. Nothing but a Deluge of Fire is able to purge it. There was never more Injuſtice, Perfidiouſneſs, Treachery, Debauchery, Inſolence, and Envy; never more Vanity, Luxury, Pride, Cruelty, Blaſphemies, Impiety, and Atheiſm. We may juſtly apply to our Days that which the Prophet *Hoſea* ſaid of the Corruption of his Time: *There is no Truth, no Mercy, no Knowledge of God in the Land: There is nothing but Swearing, Lying, Killing, Stealing, and committing Adultery: They break out, and Blood toucheth Blood,* Hoſ. iv. Therefore we have good Cauſe to make *David's* Prayer, *Help, Lord; for the godly Man ceaſeth, for the Faithful fail from among the Children of Men. They ſpeak Vanity every one with his Neighbour; with flattering Lips, and with a double Heart, do they ſpeak,* Pſ. xii. O wicked World, a World overflowing with Iniquity, a Sink of Impurity, a burning Furnace, heated with the impure Flames of the bottomleſs Pit, and choked with the Smoke of Hell! But Sin reigns not only in this wretched World, but it defaces alſo the Church of God, and cauſeth moſt fearful Diſorders among thoſe that bear the glorious Name of *Chriſtians.* They were anciently to be diſcerned from the reſt of the World by their Speech, Converſation, and Behaviour; but the Devil hath wonderfully debauched them; he hath blotted out God's Image in their Souls, hath taken from them that noble Diſtinction that removed far away all Difference between them and the World. We cannot with Juſtice ſay to moſt Chriſtians of our Age, as was ſaid to the

Apostle St. *Peter*, *Thy Speech bewrayeth thee:* Nor appropriate to them what *Isaac* said to one of his Sons, *Thy Voice is the Voice of Jacob; but thou hast the Hands of Esau*; for they have both the Voice and Hands of the profane *Esau*; they speak and live as he did, they publish their Crimes with a brazen Face, and endeavour to glory in their Shame. The Air is infected with their profane and filthy Language, with their impudent Lying, with their fearful Oaths, and grievous Blasphemies; and the Earth is defiled with their horrid Sins, and abominable Crimes: Covetousness, Ambition, Lust, and all manner of Vices, have ascended the Throne; they act and command in chief in every Place. They who have in their Mouths the holy Name of the Lord Jesus, and make Profession of following his sacred Footsteps, give us good Cause to take up again St. *Paul's* Lamentation and Complaint, *Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are Enemies of the Cross of Christ; whose End is Destruction, whose God is their Belly, and whose Glory is their Shame, who mind earthly Things*, Phil. iii.

If we would seek in these Days for the Christian Virtues, where shall we find Faith, Hope, and Charity? Where shall we meet with Righteousness, Fidelity, Holiness, Innocence, Goodness, Meekness, Humility, Patience, Piety, and Devotion? You Daughters of Heaven, what is become of you? We cannot see any more your angelical Countenances. We are so far from beholding the delightful Beams of your divine Presence, that we cannot spy out any of your Footsteps upon Earth. You may thereby understand, Christians, that the Son of God is at Hand; for Iniquity abounds, Charity grows cold, and there is no more Faith upon Earth.

In the Midst of such a woeful Corruption, who of us afflicts his Soul, as righteous *Lot?* Who weeps Day and Night, as *David*, a Man after God's own Heart? Where can we spy out the Fountains of Tears of the Prophet *Jeremiah?* Or, the Confusion

of

of the Face of *Daniel?* Or, the Zeal of *Moſes* and *Phinehas*, and of St. *Paul?* If the Angel of God, that went through the Midſt of *Jeruſalem*, did take a Review in our Days of the Inhabitants of this Land, I am afraid he would not find many marked with the Letter *Tau*; nor any weeping and ſighing for the Abominations that are amongſt us. For Evil and Wickedneſs are become familiar to us, by the Means of an univerſal Infection. Our continual Converſation with the Vicious accuſtoms us to their heinous Crimes, and to their impious Diſcourſes; as we are accuſtomed by Degrees to breathe in an unwholeſome Air without Averſion, and to hear the fearful Downfall of the Cataracts of the River *Nile* without Repugnancy.

But we are ſo far from grieving at the univerſal Inundation of Vice in the World, that we ourſelves are carried away with the impetuous Torrent of Corruption. Sin gets upon us inſenſibly, and overcomes us; ſo that the World is not unlike to the Houſe mentioned by God in the xivth of *Leviticus*; for it is not only infected with an incommodious Leproſy, but it infects all ſuch as dwell therein. The Men of the World have an eaſier Taſk to teach us their Vice, than we have to teach and perſuade them to Virtue; as a peſtiferous Body may ſpread the Infection, and give it to a Thouſand who are ſound; whereas a Thouſand in perfect Health cannot heal one infected with the Plague: So that, as under the Ceremonial Law, the clean Veſſel ſanctified not the defiled; but the defiled infected, by its Approaches, ſuch as were clean; evil Companies corrupt good Manners, and the Flames of the moſt burning Zeal are extinguiſhed by the Coldneſs of the Age. As Lambs cannot feed among Briars and Thorns, without leaving behind them ſome of their Wool; likewiſe the harmleſs and meek Souls cannot live amongſt ſo much Cozenage and Malice, without loſing ſomething of their Innocence, and Chriſtian Simplicity.

Who

Who is it amongst us that can say, with a safe Conscience, *that the World is crucified to him, and that he is crucified to the World?* Gal. vi. Or, who is it that lives in the World without being guilty of its Sins, as the Fish drinks of the Sea-water, and receives nothing of its Bitterness? *Psal.* xxvi. Who can converse in the Courts of Princes, as *Joseph* in *Egypt*, as *Daniel* in *Babylon*, or as the Queen *Esther* in the Court of *Ahasuerus?* Is there any that can justly say, *that he hath washed his Hands in Innocence, and purified his Conscience from all dead Works to serve the living God?* Heb. ix. Who can speak in this Manner, *I have purified my Heart, I am clean from my Sin?* Prov. xx. In Truth, *If we say that we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us,* 1 John i. We have good Reason to break out into the Prophet *Isaiah's* Exclamation, when he saw God sitting upon his Throne, *Woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a Man of unclean Lips, and I dwell in the Midst of People of unclean Lips,* Isa. vi. Or we may say with the same Prophet, *From the Sole of the Foot unto the Crown of the Head, there is no whole Part.* Not only the Souls that are fixed on the Earth, but also such as mount up to Heaven by fervent Prayers, and devout Meditations, have good Cause to acknowledge their Imperfections, and to ask Forgiveness. If any fancy himself to be perfectly whole, and free from all Infection, let him look into his Conscience, and seriously examine it, and it will happen to him as to *Moses*; when he put his Hand into his Bosom, he took it out again as white as Snow, all covered with Leprosy, *Exod.* iv. Where is there a Christian, that feels no Law commanding in his Members, and struggling against the Law of his Mind? Who is there, that finds not by Experience the Truth of St. *Paul's* Saying, *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the Things that ye would?* Rom. vii. Gal. v. Without Doubt, such as know not, nor ever have felt, the bitter and vehement Strugglings of their carnal Lusts that war

war againſt the Soul, 2 *Pet.* i. cannot conceive what it is to deny themſelves, *to put off the old Man with his Deeds, to crucify the Fleſh with its Affections and filthy Luſts*, Epheſ. iv. Such know not what it is to mortify our Members, to cut off our Right Feet and Right Hands, and to pluck out our Right Eyes, *Mat.* x. that is to ſay, to deſtroy, and by an holy Violence, to give a deadly Wound to all our brutiſh Paſſions, and vicious Affections, when they ſhould ſeem to us as dear and as uſeful as our Hands and Feet, and as tender as our Right Eyes, *Col.* iii. *Mat.* v.

If theſe accurſed Affections could but declare their Names, they would ſay, as the evil Spirits of the Goſpel, *Our Name is Legion; for we are many.* As that Devil that poſſeſſed the Lunatick, mentioned by St. *Matthew*, *caſt him ſometimes into the Fire, at other Times into the Water*; thus theſe carnal Luſts labour to caſt us, ſometimes into the Flames of Ambition, or into the burning Heat of Covetouſneſs, or to hurry us headlong into the Gulph of unlawful Delights, or into the Mud of filthy and carnal Pleaſures. Furthermore, they break the Chains and Ties with which we imagine to ſtop their Fury; they war and fight againſt us by Day and by Night, and at every Moment they return to charge us home, and renew the Combat. Every where they aſſault us, and have no more Reſpect for Temples and Houſes of Prayer, than for common and publick Places. As *Satan* had once the Boldneſs to encounter with *Jehoſhua* the High-prieſt before the Angel of God; likewiſe theſe curſed Luſts are ſo impudent as to attempt us in the moſt religious Aſſemblies, and the devouteſt Congregations, as well as where we are engaged in the moſt helliſh and debauched Companies of the World.

But theſe Luſts, that war againſt the Soul, are as ſubtle and malicious, as they are cruel and obſtinate: When they perceive us upon our Guard, and ſee that there is nothing to be got, they conceal their Weapons and their Fire, but it is with a Deſign to ſurprize and burn

burn us when we are leaſt aware. As there are certain Creatures that counterfeit the Dead, that Men might ſpare their Labour to kill them; likewiſe this treacherous Fleſh appears of its own Accord as dead, that we might ſpare it, and not totally deprive it of Life. If then we leave it in Peace and Quiet, it recovers its Strength and Vigour, and aſſaults us afreſh with its poiſonous Darts. When we imagine that we have cut up this wretched Plant by the Root, it grows, and breaks forth into Bitterneſs. When we think, that we have put out this Fire with the Tears of our Repentance, it kindles again, and burſts forth into fierce Flames. As ſoon as we have cut the cunning Serpent to pieces with the ſharp Knife of true Repentance, it gets together, and when it ſeems to have loſt all Strength and Heat, it recovers again in our Breaſts, and wounds us to the very Heart. In ſhort, as the evil Spirit, mentioned by our Saviour in the Goſpel, when he was driven out of one Houſe, waited for a good Opportunity to return; which as ſoon as he perceived, he took unto himſelf ſeven other Spirits worſe than himſelf, ſo that the laſt Condition of that Man was worſe than the firſt, *Mark* xii. thus, after an afflicting Faſt, and fervent Prayers; after a Torrent of contrite Tears; when we imagine that we have caſt out of our Hearts the moſt dangerous Luſts; if we begin to relent, and to open to them the Door, they burſt in again upon us with more Fury, and render the Sequel of our Life far more bitter and unpleaſant.

But if you had not ſo many Sins, and your Luſts were not ſo violent, when the old Man ſhould not have ſo much Strength in our Members, and the Temptations ſhould not overcome us ſo often; tell me, I pray, Chriſtian Souls, in what Virtue do you excel? Have you all the Beauty, the Glory, and Perfection, that God requires? Is your Holineſs without the leaſt Spot or Blemiſh? Is your Innocence as white as Snow, and as bright as the Light? Is your Zeal as hot and burning as that of the *Seraphims?* Is your Charity ſincere, without

without Paint or Diſguiſe, as that of Chriſt, who gave his Life for you? Do you love God for his Name-ſake, or becauſe of his excellent Perfections? Do you love him with all your Heart, with all your Strength, and with all your Thoughts? Do you love him more than you love yourſelves, or any Thing in the World? Do you hate all Things that he hates? And do you carefully abſtain from every Thing that diſpleaſeth him? Do you love your Neighbour in God, and for the Sake of that good God whoſe Image he bears? Do you love him as you love yourſelves, without Hypocriſy or Diſguiſe? Do you never deal otherwiſe with others, than you would have them deal with you? And do you perform to them the ſame good Offices that you would have them perform to you, if they were in the ſame Condition as you are at preſent? Do you ſhine in the Midſt of the dark Night of this Age, as ſo many Tapers lighted with the Beams of the Sun of Righteouſneſs? *Phil.* ii. Do you live as Citizens of Heaven, and as Fellow-citizens of the Saints, and as the Children of God? *Phil.* i. 5. Or as ſuch as expect the bleſſed Hope and Appearing of the Glory of the great God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt? *Tit.* ii. Is your Heart in Heaven, where your Treaſure ſhould be, and your Glory and Happineſs? And do you walk as Perſons that aſcend up by the Steps and Degrees of Piety to the heavenly *Jeruſalem?* Do you go from Faith to Faith, from Hope to Hope? And do you make every Day ſome new Progreſs in Holineſs? Do you never grieve the Holy Spirit, by whom you have been ſealed for the Day of Redemption? Are you immoveable, abounding always in the Work of the Lord? *Epheſ.* iv. And do you endeavour to be found in him, without Spot or Blemiſh, in Peace? 1 *Cor.* xv. 2 *Pet.* ii.

Tell me, devout Souls, whether you be not as the Fire and Light? For as there is no Flame ſo pure, but hath its Smoke, no Star ſo bright, but diſappears at the Riſing of the Sun; ſo there is no Life ſo holy

and

and harmleſs, but hath its Imperfections, and cannot abide the Sight of an impartial God, and the exact Inquiſition of his Juſtice. When we have well prayed and wept, and begged Forgiveneſs, God hath beſtowed upon us a new Heart, and a new Spirit: After all, we have Need that he ſhould enlighten us afreſh with the gracious Beams of his divine Countenance, that he ſhould lead us by the Hand, direct us by his Wiſdom, and accompliſh his Virtue by our Infirmities.

Examine ſeriouſly, my dear Friends, to what Exerciſes of Devotion you are moſt inclined, and what ſecret Motions you feel in your Souls. Who is it that hath the greateſt Share in your Heart and Affection? What Thoughts lull you aſleep, and what are thoſe that awake you? What do you think upon, for the moſt Part? Upon God and his Glory, or upon the World and its Vanities? Upon Heaven and its Excellencies, or upon the Earth and its Riches? Upon Paradiſe and its immortal Delights, or upon the Fleſh and its baſe Satisfactions? And when you meditate upon divine Things, are you certain that you perform it with a religious Attention, with an inward Delight that raviſhes and comforts poor Souls? And when you offer any Prayers to God, do you diſcharge this Duty with Humility, and an holy Zeal? Are your Hearts and Affections carried up to Heaven before you lift up thitherward your Eyes and Hands? Are your Oraiſons like the Perfume of the Saints, that come out of golden Phials? Are they like the Incenſe of the ancient *Iſraelites*, that ſmoked upon an Altar, burning with a celeſtial Fire? Do they thus proceed from a Soul purified by Faith, which is more precious than fine Gold? Do they come from an Heart that is inflamed with a Zeal that never dies, and that aſcends continually on high? Do you beſtow your Alms with that earneſt and fervent Charity that God requires of you? Do you open your Bowels to your Brethren, before you open to them your Purſe? And do you beſtow your Hearts upon the Poor before you beſtow your Money? And

And for the publick Devotions that you owe to God, pray tell me with what Humility and Reſpect they are performed: Do you call your Delight the Days dedicated to his Glory, and to the Celebration of his holy Myſteries? *Iſa.* lviii. Or do you look upon them as troubleſome? Do not they cauſe you to complain in yourſelves, as thoſe profane *Jews* ſpoken of by *Malachi*, *Behold what a Wearineſs is it!* Mal. i. Do you go up to the Houſe of God with the Voice of Melody, and Tranſports of Joy? *Pſal.* xli. Or do you go up thither out of Cuſtom in a careleſs Manner? When *Jacob* went up to *Bethel* to offer Sacrifices, he buried under Ground all the Gods of Gold and Silver, that were in his Family, *Gen.* liii. Likewiſe you, religious Souls, when you intend to go up to offer your ſpiritual Sacrifices in the true *Bethel*, where God beſtows in ſuch Plenty his Bread from Heaven that gives Life to the World; do you not forget to bury all your earthly Cares, your carnal Luſts? Or elſe, do you nouriſh in your Hearts all thoſe falſe Gods, of whom the World is ſo fond? Do you look upon the holy Aſſemblies with an unconcerned Eye? Or do you behold them with Reverence and Reſpect, as the living Images of that glorious Church, gathered together before God's majeſtick Throne, which worſhip him Day and Night in his holy Temple? Are thoſe divine *Pſalms* that are there ſung, only upon your Tongues? Or do you ſing them with your Hearts to the Lord? Do you think upon the Angels Songs, and the Holy Spirit's *Hallelujahs*, with ſacred Tranſports of Joy? Is the Word of God only an airy Sound, that ſtrikes your Ears, or doth it reach your Conſciences? *Col.* iii. Doth not your Heart burn within you, while God ſpeaks by the Miniſtry of his Servants, and opens to you his holy Scriptures? *Rev.* xix. Doth this Heart of yours burn with an heavenly Fire, or with reſtleſs Impatience, to ſee the End of your Devotions, that you might return to your domeſtick Affairs, to your worldly Delights, or to your carnal Paſtimes? *Luke* xiv.

Doth

Doth your Soul thirſt for God, for the ſtrong and living God? *Pſal.* xliii. And is the performing of the holy Will of your heavenly Father become your Meat, and your only Delight? *John* iv. *Pſalm* ciii. In ſhort, do you fly as ſwift as the bleſſed Angels, when your great God and Saviour offers to you an Occaſion of advancing his Kingdom, of comforting his choſen, and edifying the Souls for whom he died? When *Abraham* offered unto God many Beaſts in Sacrifice, a Flight of Birds came, and lighted upon his dead Offerings, *Gen.* xv. Thus, when we preſent unto God the Sacrifices of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, and intend to multiply the Acts of our Devotions, a great number of vain and idle Thoughts come to interrupt us. *Abraham* frighted away thoſe troubleſome Birds; but it is not always in our Power to drive away from our Minds theſe intruding Thoughts that diſturb us in our Devotion. When we will lift up ourſelves unto God, and draw near to his ſacred Throne, our Hearts are far more dull and heavy than ever *Moſes's* Hands were; ſo that they fall down again to the Earth, and mind earthly Things. We need therefore, that our Chief-prieſt ſhould hold them up: And furthermore it is neceſſary that they ſhould be perfumed with the ſweet Odours of his moſt holy Sacrifices, *Exod.* xvii.

If *David*, a Man after God's own Heart, intreats that he would be pleaſed to ſanctify the Words of his Mouth, and the Meditations of his Heart, *Pſal.* xv. if the Prophet *Daniel*, whom the Holy Spirit ſtyles *a Man greatly beloved*, Dan. ix. who ſpent the Days and Nights in Devotion, ſeeks how to make his Prayers acceptable to God; if the Prophet *Iſaiah* had Need that his Lips ſhould be purified with a burning Coal taken from the Altar, *Iſ.* vi. Who will wonder if the Meditations of the devouteſt Souls be ſo often interrupted? If their Prayers be ſo cold and lukewarm, who can think it ſtrange, that we are not able to pray as we ought? *Rom.* viii. And that we have Need to deſire God's Holy Spirit of Prayer and Supplication, who

prays

prays and intercedes for us, with Sighs and Groans which cannot be expreſſed? *Zech.* xiii. *Rom.* viii.

That which afflicts moſt the true Believers, is, that when the imagine that they have attained to ſome Kind of Perfection in the Exerciſes of Piety, they find many Tims to their unſpeakable Sorrow, that they are but Beginners, and that they have made no Progreſs at all. For as the Stone caſt up into the Air falls down of its own Accord, by reaſon of its natural Weight; and as the Water often heated, becomes as often cold and frozen, becauſe Cold is a Property belonging to it; likewiſe our Souls, that mount up to God in holy Meditations, and zealous Prayers fall down again to theſe earthly Vanities; they become cold and heavy; for theſe are their natural Properties. If God refuſed the Sacrifices of ſuch Beaſts as were lame and ſickly, how will he accept of us, or our Devotions, if he ſhould treat us with Severity, who are faint in his Service, and cannot walk in his Ways without halting and ſtumbling every Moment? For theſe Conſiderations I may apply to the Spiritual Joy, what was ſaid of the earthly and worldly Mirth, *Joy is cut off by Sadneſs*, Iſa. lxv. For when we have felt in our Breaſts this unſpeakable Joy of the Holy Ghoſt, and it begins afterwards to abate, it ſeems to us as if it had taken its Flight to Heaven, as the Smoke of *Manoah's* Sacrifice; then as great a Sorrow ſeizeth upon our Souls; therefore we may complain and cry out as *David, Will the Lord caſt me off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Promiſe fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in Anger ſhut up his tender Mercies?* Pſal. lxxv. And pray in the Language of *Iſaiah, Lord, awaken thy Jealouſy, and the Stirring of thy Bowels, that are ſhut up to me.* Finally, if after all the Exerciſes of Devotion, if after a ſerious and ſettled Meditation upon God's holy Word, if after Faſting and Mortification, and Prayers and Tears, and a conſtant Attendance in the Duties of Religion, we find

any good Progress in Piety, we may then also perceive Vice to proceed out of our most glorious Virtues, and perfectest Graces. For as the Moth enters soonest into the richest Stuffs and Cloths; thus Pride creeps into the noblest Souls, and breeds in the most enlightened Understandings. As a primitive Doctor of the Christian Church hath very well observed, All Vices are begot by Corruption, and by other Vices; only Pride and Presumption proceed from Virtue. O how hard a Task is it for a Man enabled with Gifts and Perfections that raise him above the Vulgar, not to be puffed up with Pride, nor deceived with a fond Conceit of himself! As the beautiful Bird looks upon and admires the dainty and various Colours of its Wings; thus we behold and admire ourselves, we are in love with our own Beauty, and idolize our Virtues. Therefore, as the Nurse leaves the Child sometimes to its Legs, and suffers it to fall, that it might know its own Strength, and learn to hold faster by the Hand; thus God withdraws from us the Assistance of his Grace, to humble us, and to cause us to implore most earnestly the Help, and favourable Succours, of his Holy Spirit. When St. *Peter* felt the sacred Flames of that holy Zeal that was kindled in his Heart, and that sincere Love that he had for Christ, he rejoiced, and imagined himself to be strong enough to resist all the Powers of Hell, and to frustrate all the fiery Darts of the Devil. This good Opinion that he had of himself, and of his own Ability, transports him to that Confidence, as to contradict our Saviour Christ, and to protest, *Although all should be offended in thee, yet will I not be offended; though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* This was he that trembled at the Voice of a Damsel, whose Fall and Apostasy was as remarkable as his Confidence was great; so that he, who thinketh he standeth, should take heed lest he fall, *Rom.* xi.

There is no good-natured Child, but is vexed to live amongst such as curse and reproach its Parents;

and if it ſhould happen to be concerned unawares in the Offence, or to occaſion the Death of him from whom it had its Being, it will feel an eternal Diſpleaſure. Now, it is certain, that whilſt we live in this World, we muſt ſpend our Time amongſt thoſe that blaſpheme the holy Name of God, and abuſe the Glory of his eternal Godhead. Moreover, Vice and Corruption are ſo univerſal, that we ourſelves offend this Father of Mercies and Compaſſions; we add Sin to Sin, and complete the Meaſure of our Iniquities.

Let us therefore conclude from hence, believing Souls, that Death is not to be feared as an Evil, or a Calamity, but that it is rather deſirable as an Advantage, and a Bleſſing. For ſeeing that it is to be longed for, becauſe it frees us from all the Miſchiefs and Sufferings of the World; we are rather to ſeek it with God's good Leave, becauſe it cloſeth our Eyes, and conveys out of our Sight all the Sins and Abominations that are in the World; and becauſe it ſtops our Ears, and hinders us from hearing the Impieties and the filthy Diſcourſes, that infect the Air. Since Death is to be embraced with Joy, becauſe it delivers our Bodies from the Diſeaſes that torment them, and our Minds from the Cares and Diſpleaſures that vex and afflict them; it deſerves to be welcomed with greater Expreſſions of Gladneſs, becauſe it delivers us from all Remains of Sin, and puts a Period to our natural Corruption: So that it is to be eſteemed, and looked upon, as the Death and Deſtruction of the old Man, rather than the Death of a true Believer.

Samſon rejoiced in his Death, becauſe he knew, that in dying, his mortal Enemies ſhould die alſo, and be deſtroyed with him. We have more Cauſe to rejoice at our Death, and to give God Thanks at that Time; ſince in our dying, or rather in paſſing from Death to Life, we may ſee the Deſtruction of all the dangerous Enemies of our Salvation, who are more dreadful to us than the *Philiſtines* were to *Samſon*. All the moſt cruel and barbarous Men of the World

are not ſo much to be feared, as the Luſts of our filthy Fleſh, that put out the Eyes of our Underſtanding, that cauſe us to be the Devil's Sport, and to worſhip many falſe Gods.

We commonly run out with Haſte from a Place infected with the Plague: And ſhould we not make as much Speed, by our Vows and Prayers, to get out of the World, ſince Vice is ſo infectious and univerſal all over it, that ſo many thouſand Souls are therewith miſerably ſpoiled; ſince the World is a *Babylon*, where all Manner of Debauchery, Vice, and Folly, are mixed together; where Injuſtice and Impiety reign? Have you not greater Cauſe to be tranſported with Joy, when God delivers us from our woeful Captivity, than the Children of *Iſrael* had, when it pleaſed him to call them out of *Babylon?* Should they not ſing to him, when the Lord brought them back, and reſtored them to *Sion*, who came from their Captivity, we were as thoſe that dream; then our Mouths were full of Laughter, and our Tongues with Songs of Triumph?

In ſhort, as the Lord Jeſus, when he had reſtored *Lazarus* to Life, and taken him out of his Grave, had Compaſſion on him, and could not ſee him any longer wrapped up in his Winding-ſheet, and tied with a Napkin; therefore he commanded, *Looſe him, and let him go:* Thus, this merciful Lord, who hath made us to be Partakers of the firſt Reſurrection, and called our Souls out of the noiſome Grave of our Luſts, is moved with Compaſſion for us, when he ſees theſe wretched Souls drag about them the Relicts of Sin, and ſome Remains of that Corruption in which they were wrapped. Therefore he will cauſe them to hear his ſweet and comfortable Voice, *Looſe them, and let them go.* Let them go to the eternal Manſions, to the city of the living God, to the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, to the glorious Companies of Angels, and to the Church and Congregation of the Firſt-born, whoſe Names are written in Heaven.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a true Chriſtian, who comforts himſelf with this Conſideration, That Death ſhall deliver him from Sin, that reigns ſo much in the World, and from all Remains of his wretched Corruption.

O Moſt Gracious High-prieſt, Holy, Innocent, ſeparated from Sinners, exalted above all Heavens, who art now ſhining in Light and Glory; look upon me from thy Sanctuary, and have Compaſſion on my wretched State. Thou underſtandeſt well the Cauſe of my Grief, O Lord, who ſearcheſt the Heart, and readeſt my moſt ſecret Thoughts, that I grieve to ſee ſo much Injuſtice and Impiety reigning this Day in the World; to ſee Vice and Wickedneſs defacing thy holy Church. But that which chiefly increaſeth my Pain and aggravates my Diſpleaſure is, to find myſelf guilty, and ſpotted with the general Corruption, and my Fleſh warring and ſtruggling againſt the Spirit. The Luſts of the Fleſh not only diſturb me, but they get many Times the Victory, and inſult over mine Infirmities. Sin appears to me, not only in all its helliſh Deformity, ſo that I am thereby aſhamed of myſelf; but I alſo acknowledge, to the Praiſe of thy Grace, that all that is beſt in me, cannot endure an exact Inquiſition of thy Juſtice. Alas, my God! How imperfect is my Piety! How languiſhing is my Devotion! I worſhip thee too much for Cuſtom, and in a very ſlight Manner. I often praiſe thee with my Tongue, and honour thee with my Lips, whilſt my Heart is far from thee. The Love that I bear to thee is not pure and fervent; and my Charity, inſtead of being burning, is quite cold, or lukewarm. I have not a ſufficient Truſt upon thy Promiſes, and upon thy fatherly Care; my Hope is not ſettled, it doth not fill my Soul with heavenly Joys and Comforts. Thine Eyes, O Lord, that ſee all the ſecret Cloſets of my Heart, and pierce into the Depths, are too holy and pure to paſs over the Sight of Evils, and to approve of the ill-favoured Features of Satan, *yet imprinted in me. Thou*

discoverest not only my Sins, Iniquities, and all my evil Deeds, but thou also beholdest all the Spots and Imperfections of my best Performances, and of my most glorious Acts. My Lord, and my God, I am not only grieved to see so much Sin in the World, in the Church, and in myself, but I am also troubled, that I have not Grief enough; that my Soul is not sufficiently vexed, as that of righteous Lot; *that the Zeal of thine House doth not eat me up, as it did the Man after thine own Heart; that mine Eyes are not become a Well-spring of Tears, as those of the Prophet; that I am not heartily concerned for thy Church, as thine holy Apostle; and that I do not sigh and cry, as the Servants whom thou didst mark with the Letter* Tau. *O wonderful Lord! Since it is thy Pleasure, wherefore do I not embrace thee with a lively Faith and a sincere Repentance? Wherefore do I not strive by Prayers and Supplications, to obtain from thee thy most precious Blessings, an inward Change of myself and Spirit, that I may heartily love, fear, and adore thee as thou deservest? O Lord, I find thou hast not forsaken me, but hast commissioned Death to convey me out of this troublesome and sorrowful Abode, to destroy all my mortal Enemies, my Sins and Lusts, and advance me to the Freedom of thy Children. I am not disturbed at the Approach of so great a Benefactor, that rejoiceth my Heart, and causeth me to embrace and welcome its Arrival as thy Messenger, sent to draw me out of this* Egypt *of Cruelty and Oppression, out of this* Babylon *of Vice and Abomination. I am ready, Lord; when wilt thou free me from these Chains and Fetters of Mortality, to ascend up to my God and Saviour, who is ready to embrace me? Dispatch to me some of thy blessed Angels, who may carry me up to thy holy Mountain, to thine heavenly* Jerusalem, *to thy glorious Paradise, where no Impurity can be admitted, no Serpent to seduce us, nor Temptations to prevail upon us; where I shall never offend thee, nor grieve thy Holy Spirit, whereby I am sealed to the Day of Redemption. O my God! I am weary to hear thy holy Name so often blasphemed, and to see so much Impiety and Wicked-*

Wickedneſs reigning every where in the World. Haſte my Departure hence, and the Accompliſhment of all the glorious Promiſes of Salvation to thy Church and People; when I ſhall behold thy Face continually, love thee with a perfect love, and worſhip thee without Diſturbance in the Society of the glorified Spirits, and holy Angels; when I ſhall ſing forth thy Praiſes in Heaven, be clothed with the white Robes of thy holy Martys, and with the Seraphims attend upon thy magnificent Throne. O my God! grant that thy holy Zeal, *kindled in my Soul, may ſerve me as a fiery Chariot, and a ſacred Flame, to carry and haſten me up to thy celeſtial Palace, where thou haſt prepared for me an eternal Manſion, and a bleſſed Inheritance.* Amen.

CHAP. XXII.

The Tenth Conſolation *is, the Glory and Happineſs of our Souls at their Departure out of the Body.*

IF there were neither Puniſhment nor Torment after this Life to be feared, the Wicked and Unbelievers, who proſper in the World, might juſtly eſteem themſelves the happieſt of all Men. And if there were neither Glory nor Rewards to be expected after Death, the Righteous and the Faithful, who drink here below, Cups full of Bitterneſs and Sorrow, would be the moſt miſerable of all Creatures. The Condition of the Beaſts would appear more happy than theirs; for they enjoy in Quiet and Peace, all the Pleaſures that their Animal Nature is able to reliſh. They are not tormented by ſo many Diſeaſes as vex our Bodies; neither do they know the Cares and Diſpleaſures that conſume and fret our Minds. They grieve not for the Time paſt, nor trouble themſelves with any Apprehenſions of the Time to come. They

never feel the fierce Aſſaults of Luſt: They are ignorant of many of thoſe Paſſions that torment and domineer over our Souls. All their Pains and Sufferings vaniſh with their Breath; ſo that when they are dead, their Sufferings have an End. If we make our Eyes the Judges of theſe Things, we may ſay, *The Accident that happens to Men and Beaſts is the ſame Accident; as is the Death of the one, ſo is the Death of the other.* But if we ſearch and examine farther, we ſhall find more Difference than between Heaven and Earth, between Light and Darkneſs: For it is true, that the Death of Beaſts delivers them from the Senſe of all Evils, but doth not introduce them into any real Happineſs. When it puts an End to their Miſery, it puts a Period to their Being, and to all that Pleaſure and Content, which they formerly enjoyed; for they die without any Hopes of living again.

If we look to the Wicked and Unbelievers, we ſhall find, that Death deprives them not only of their Honours, Riches, and of all their Pleaſures, and carnal Enjoyments, but puts out their Taper in the blackeſt Darkneſs, and all their greateſt Delights are loſt in a vaſt Sea of Bitterneſs. If Death looſeth them from the Chain of Miſery, unto which all the Children of *Adam* are tied, if it frees their Bodies from the Pain of any temporal Evils, it caſts their Souls into eternal Torments. But for the virtuous and believing Chriſtians, if Death is ſo great a Friend to them, becauſe it delivers them from many Evils and Miſeries, it is a greater Friend, in regard it opens to them the Gate that leads to an endleſs Glory and Happineſs.

The Son of God had a Deſign to perſuade us of this Truth, in that remarkable Parable of the xvith of St. *Luke's* Goſpel. For at one hand he ſhews a rich Miſer clothed in Purple and fine Linen, feeding upon Dainties, and living in much Splendour, and Magnificence; and at the other he diſcovers to us a poor Wretch, named *Lazarus*, all covered with Sores, ly-

ſing at the rich Man's Gate, intreating that he might ſhare with the Dogs in the Crumbs that fell from the rich Man's Table. The Dogs had Compaſſion on him and licked his Sores. At laſt, the Poor Man died, and was carried by the Angels into *Abraham's* Boſom. O wonderful Change! He that was lately a Companion ſcarce good enough for Dogs, now ſolaces himſelf in the Angels Embraces. He that was lying at the Gate of a proud and unmerciful Wretch, is admitted into the glorious Palace of Immortality, and repoſes himſelf in the Boſom of a charitable and rich *Abraham*, where he is ſatisfied with the Bread of the living God, and drinks of the Rivers of his Pleaſures. The rich Man died alſo; but whilſt his Body was laid in the Earth with State and Honour, the Devils dragged his Soul into Hell, and caſt it into a Fire that burns continually, and that nothing is able to extinguiſh. Therefore our Saviour repreſents this damned Soul crying out of Hell-fire, *Father* Abraham, *have Pity upon me, and ſend* Lazarus, *that he may dip the Tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue; for I am tormented in theſe Flames.* In the next Verſe our Lord ſhews, how all the Complaints of the Damned are fruitleſs, and their Tortures remedileſs. He makes *Abraham* return an Anſwer to this wretched Son, *My Son remember, that thou in thy Life-time receiveds thy good Things, and likewiſe* Lazarus *evil Things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented.*

The Heathens have looked upon Death as the End of all their Afflictions and Sufferings; but they have never taſted of the Powers of the Life to come, they have never had any Aſſurance of future Glory and Happineſs. The ſpiritual Joys, and celeſtial Comforts, God keeps for them that fear him, and worſhip him in Spirit and in Truth. Theſe precious Riches, and divine Excellencies, are only diſcoverable to the Faithful, chiefly ſince the Time in which Chriſt our Saviour hath brought Life and Immortality to Light, through the Goſpel. Hitherto I have given you a ſhort Survey

of

of the Calamities that attend upon us in this mortal State; I have eſſayed to preſent to you all the Comforts that we may gather from thence, to ſtrengthen a believing Soul, and enable it to withſtand and endure all the Encounters with which it is aſſaulted in this Valley of Tears. At preſent I intend to deſcribe its future Happineſs, when it is ſeparated from the Body, and introduced into Heaven. I ſhall, as far as I am able, diſcover to you that Glory and Bliſs which our Souls enjoy, in Expectation of the great Morn of the Reſurrection. You muſt not think to ſee here any perfect Image of our celeſtial Paradiſe, or any magnificent Draught of the Advantages reſerved for us there. It would be as difficult a Taſk as to paint the Sun in its Splendour, or to meaſure the Waters of the Sea. I cannot find Words to expreſs my Thoughts; all my Conceptions are far below an Happineſs ſo perfect, and a Glory ſo ſublime. I ſhall think that I have done enough, if I can but repreſent to you ſome few Beams of ſo great a Light, if I can but ſhew ſome Drops of that Ocean of heavenly Pleaſures, in which we ſhall ſwim for all Eternity.

I ſhall not deliver any Thing from my own Fancy, nor offer to ſpeak of that which I have never learned from the great Doctor of our Souls. I ſhall not engage myſelf in vain Speculations, more fit to pleaſe and puff up the curious Wits, than to comfort and rejoice the devout Souls, or ſatisfy ſuch as hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs. One Word from the Mouth of the Lord is better, and far more worth than all the Reaſonings of human Wiſdom, than all the Subtilties of Philoſophy, than all the Arguings and Concluſions of the moſt refined and eloquent Ages. In this Deſcription I ſhall not ſeek mine own Glory, nor the Applauſes of the World, but the Glory of my God and the Inſtruction of Souls which he hath purchaſed with his Blood. I deſire to be underſtood of the weakeſt Capacities, as well as of the learned. I hope that ſuch as know the Language of *Canaan*, ſuch

as

as have taſted of the good Word of God, and of the Powers of the Life to come, will not miſtake me. For others, who have not been accuſtomed to the Reliſh of ſpiritual Things, to whom the Language of God's Holy Spirit is inſipid and unſufferable; if they are not moved nor benefited by this Treatiſe, I dare ſay it is none of my Fault, but theirs. Therefore, as the wiſe Men, when they travelled to *Bethlehem*, where Jeſus Chriſt was lying in a Manger, took the Star of the Eaſt to their Guide; ſo we, who are marching to our true *Bethlehem*, where our great God and Saviour is ſitting upon the Throne of his Glory, will follow no other Guidance, but that divine Light which comes down from Heaven. And as it is impoſſible to number all the Stars that ſhine in the Heavens, but we are wont to reduce them to certain Figures and Conſtellations; thus we will not undertake to ſhew you every Particular of our private Meditations, upon this rich and divine Subject; but we will diſcourſe to you of the chief Heads, leaving the reſt to your pious Thoughts, and the Information of God's Holy Spirit.

Whoſoever thou art that haſt embraced Chriſt, dead and crucified, by Faith and Repentance, and knoweſt thyſelf united to him, and incorporated into his myſtical Body, remember to praiſe this merciful Lord, and rejoice in his Salvation. Learn to admire the ſuper-excellent Riches of the Treaſures of his Grace, and ſeriouſly conſider how magnificent and liberal he is to thee. For he intends not only to deliver thee from all the Sufferings and Calamities that afflict thee, but he will alſo raiſe thee up to the higheſt and moſt tranſcendent Felicity. He will not only draw thee out of the deep Abyſs of Death, and eternal Damnation, but he will take thee up to the Enjoyment of the moſt bleſſed Life, and an immortal Glory. He will not only remove thee from this wretched Wilderneſs, where thou art tormented with Hunger and Thirſt, and expoſed to the ſcorching Heat of a burning

ing Sun, in poiſonous Bitings of the fiery Serpents but he will introduce thee into his celeſtial *Canaan*, where the Milk and Honey of the pureſt Joys, and moſt ſolid Comforts, flow in Abundance, and where thou ſhalt for ever repoſe thyſelf, under the refreſhing ſhadow of the Tree of Life. He will not only deliver thee from the Captivity of this miſerable World, which is a true *Babylon*, full of all Manner of Abominations; but he will lead thee into his holy *Jeruſalem*, and carry thee thither upon his Arms; not with an Intent that thou ſhouldſt build and repair it with Coſt and Labour, but that thou ſhouldſt behold the glorious and magnificent Structures, reared up by him alone from the Creation of the World, and that thou mayeſt be eternally ſatisfied with his overflowing Plenty. He will not only pluck off from thee the filthy Rags of Sin and Corruption, but he will clothe thee with a Garment of Light, of perfect Righteouſneſs and Holineſs. He will not only wipe away all Tears from thine Eyes, but he will put into thy Mouth Songs of Praiſe and Thankſgiving. He will not only break the Fetters from thy Feet, but he will place upon thy Head a Crown of pure Gold. He will not only draw thee out of a black and noiſome Dungeon, but he will place thee upon a Throne of Glory and Magnificence. He will not only extinguiſh all the carnal Luſts that war againſt thee, and put an End to all thy troubleſome Combats, but he calls thee to the Fruition of eternal Peace and celeſtial Triumph. In ſhort, God will not only ſeparate thee from the Acquaintance of ſinful and debauched men, but he will cauſe thee to enter in amongſt the Thouſands of Angels, and admit thee to the Viſion of his glorious Face.

When a compounded Thing comes to be diſſolved every Part returns to its firſt Principal: Thus, when Man dies, his Body returns to Duſt, from whence it is taken, and the Soul returns to God that gave it. As the Bird, when its Cage is broken, flies away into the Air, to ſeek its Liberty and Pleaſure; thus when this

this Body is broken to Pieces by Death, the Soul flies above the Heavens, where it meets with Reſt and Happineſs: Or, as it is when the Net is torn, the Fiſh falls into the Water, where it lives, and enjoys all its Delights; ſo when Death comes to break the Strings of this wretched Body, the Soul enters into the River of living Water, and into an Ocean of heavenly Delights: Finally as the Death of our Saviour Chriſt rent in Pieces the Veil of the earthly Sanctuary, and diſcovered all its wonderful Myſteries; thus the Death of a Believer rends the Veil of this infirm and ſinful Fleſh, and gives us a Sight of the rich Treaſuries and magnificent Excellencies of the heavenly Sanctuary. You Chriſtians whom God calls to his glorious Reſt, who may expreſs the Greatneſs or your future Happineſs? It is impoſſible to form a right Idea of it. When your whole Lives ſhould have been nothing elſe but a Continuation of Miſery, and a Chain of Calamities; you have now juſt Cauſe to comfort yourſelves, and rejoice in God with unſpeakable Joy. For when all Things are reckoned up, *the Sufferings of this preſent Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed in us.* You can loſe nothing in this Life, but God will reſtore it to you an hundred Times more in his Kingdom; beſides, there is no Compariſon between the Advantages of the Life to come, and of this mortal State or Being. Grieve not, believing Souls, to forſake an Earth overſpread with Darkneſs, full of Miſery, and all infected with Sin, ſince thy God purpoſeth to receive thee into new Heavens, all enlightened with a divine Light, and enriched with endleſs Felicities, where Righteouſneſs and Holineſs ſit upon the Throne. Grieve not for thy Separation from the moſt pious and regenerated Societies, ſince thou art to be admitted into the Companies of the glorified Saints, and bleſſed Martyrs, who have waſhed and whitened their Garments in the ſacred Blood of the Lamb; ſince thou art from henceforth to be reckoned in the Number, and of the Society,

Society, of the Angels of Light, and of the glorious Cherubims. Fret not to leave behind thee the holy Congregations of the militant Church, for thou art going apace to the glorious Congregation of the Church triumphing; and in a few Moments thou ſhalt find thyſelf amongſt the Thouſands of Angels and Saints, that worſhip God Day and Night, and adore him who lives for ever. If God haſt beſtowed upon thee worldly Riches, leave them without Regret or Diſpleaſure; for thou art going to poſſeſs ineſtimable Treaſures, which ſhall never be taken from thee. If thou art advanced to worldly Honours, caſt off thy Purple and Scarlet willingly of thine own Accord; for God will ſhortly clothe thee with an inconceivable Glory, that ſhall never change. When thou ſhouldeſt be raiſed up to the higheſt and moſt ſplendid Dignities, when thou ſhouldeſt enjoy a great, a flouriſhing Kingdom, come down from thy Throne with Joy, and let fall thy Sceptre, and thy Crown; for God calls thee to ſit upon a Throne that can never be ſhaken, to an incorruptible Crown, and to endleſs Triumphs.

Can there be any Town ſo rich, ſo great and noble, that thou mayeſt juſtly grieve to forſake it, at that Time when God intends to make thee a Citizen with the glorified Saints of the *Jeruſalem* above; where neither Crying nor Labour, neither Fear nor Grief, neither Poverty nor Want, ſhall ever come near thee; where all the Inhabitants are Kings, and poſſeſs ineſtimable Riches? Is there any Dwelling ſo beautiful and magnificent that ſhould cauſe thee to depart out of it with Sorrow? for God will lead thee into his own Palace, all built with fine Gold, and precious Stones, where he himſelf is the Light, and the Lamb is the Sun. Art thou delighted in the Enjoyment of ſome pleaſant Inheritance here on Earth? Then conſider, that all the Inheritances of the Earth are nothing in Compariſon of that incorruptible Inheritance which God keeps for thee in Heaven, and hath prepared ſince the Creation of the World. Haſt thou a

pleaſant

pleaſant Garden, or a rich Field? But what are all the Gardens of the World, in reſpect of the heavenly Paradiſe, where the Tree of Life grows, that brings forth its Fruits every Month of the Year, and where the River of living Water, as tranſparent as Cryſtal, runs continually?

What Reaſon haſt thou, Chriſtian Soul, to grieve, when thou forſakeſt the Pleaſures of the World, that thou enjoyeſt with the Children of the Earth, or the Delights of the Body, which are common to thee with the brute Beaſts; ſince God will ſatisfy thee with his moſt precious Delights? For in the bleſſed Viſion of his Face, thou ſhalt meet with Fullneſs of Joy. Haſt thou any Friends on Earth? Let it not trouble thee to leave them; for, inſtead of one Friend here below, whom thou fancieſt to be real and ſincere, thou haſt Thouſands in Heaven, who will receive thee into the eternal Manſions, and embrace thee as their Companion, and the Partaker of the ſame Glory and Happineſs. Haſt thou any Parents or Relations? I ſuppoſe they are not burthenſome to thee, and that thou receiveſt much more Pleaſure and Aſſiſtance from them, than Grief, and Ingratitude; yet thou haſt a ſpiritual Parentage in Heaven and eternal Relations. Thou haſt, in the Manſion-houſe of thy heavenly Father, a great Number of Brothers and Siſters, with whom thou ſhalt live in a bleſſed Unity, as Members of one Body, governed by the ſame Spirit, and inflamed with the ſame Zeal.

Thou Huſband, whom Death ſnatcheth away from thy beloved Wife, ſeriouſly conſider, that God will unite thee to himſelf by an inſeparable Union, and that he purpoſeth to take up to him ſome Part of thyſelf, that thy Expectations, thy Hopes, and Affections, might be now in Heaven. And thou alſo, O Woman! whom Death plucks out of the Embraces of thy dear and loving Huſband, remember that thou haſt a Huſband alſo in Heaven, who hath eſpouſed thee to himſelf for ever in Righteouſneſs, in Mercy, and Compaſſion;

paſſion; a Huſband always living and glorious; a Huſband, who loves thee with an eternal Love, that is ſtronger than Death; whoſe Affections are inflamed for thee in ſuch a Manner, that the Water of all the Seas and Rivers is not able to extinguiſh; a Huſband, who bears with all thine Infirmities, and hath redeemed thee from all thy Sins; a Huſband who hath not ſpared for thee his precious Blood, that he might procure for thee the Glory and Happineſs of his Kingdom; who invites thee to his heavenly Nuptials, having prepared and appointed for thee a Room in the Banqueting-chamber, where Thouſands of glorified Saints ſhall ſit, and there the melodious Harmony of Angels ſhall be heard; a Huſband, who calls to thee, reacheth out to thee his Hand, and opens his Boſom to receive thee. If thou haſt found any Satisfaction and Pleaſure in the Company of that Perſon, whom God hath given thee for an Aſſiſtant and Mate, judge from thence, what angelical Delights thou ſhalt meet with in the raviſhing Embraces of thy heavenly Spouſe. The moſt pleaſant Marriage-days are gone as a Shadow; but the Day, which ſhall bring thee to the celeſtial Bridegroom, ſhall never depart nor darken, and the heavenly Contentments ſhall abide and continue with thee for ever, without the leaſt Diſtaſte.

You beloved and loving Children, who are yet in the Boſom of a good Father, or of a tender-hearted Mother, ſuffer Death patiently to remove you far from them, and depart with Joy to that good God, that will receive you as his Children, ſatisfy your Souls with the Milk of his moſt bleſſed Conſolations, and will make you his Heirs, and Coheirs with his Son Jeſus Chriſt; ſay to him as the holy Prophet, *When my Father and my Mother ſhall forſake me, yet the Lord will receive me*, Iſa. lxvi. Rom. viii. Pſal. xxviii. And you, Fathers and Mothers, that have a tender Affection for your Children, if Death takes them out of your Sight, and deprives you of the Comfort of their Company,

Company, grieve not as thoſe who have no Hope. For when they ſhould be ever ſo accompliſhed, when they ſhould always have given you Pleaſure and Divertiſement, what are all theſe pitiful Delights that paſs away in a Moment, and change oftentimes into Bitterneſs and Sorrow, if compared with the eternal Pleaſures which we ſhall enjoy in the Contemplation of God's glorious Face, and in a familiar Acquaintance with his divine Wiſdom? You ſhall not return to them, but they ſhall in their Time go to you. So that you ſhall ſhortly ſee one another in the Dwelling of the Father of Spirits, *Matth.* xxvii. Death ſeparates you for a while; but the Author of your Life will bring you together for ever.

Finally, of what Age and Condition ſoever you be, if you perceive the Breath of your Life to ſtop, never grieve nor murmur at it. For if Death ſeparates you from yourſelves, it brings you nearer to God, your chief Good; and, inſtead of a wretched and periſhing Life, it will promote you to the Fruition of an eternal and ever happy one.

If we had lived in the Days when our Lord was on Earth, there is none of us but would have looked upon it as a ſingular Happineſs and Honour to have been admitted with *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, when they went up to the Mount *Tabor*, to be Eye-witneſſes of our Saviour's Transfiguration. A far greater Honour and Happineſs Death is endeavouring to procure you; it will uſher you up to Mount *Sion*, it will tranſport you above the Heavens, where you ſhall behold more excellent Wonders than ever the Apoſtles beheld upon Mount *Tabor*. For you ſhall not only ſee this glorious Saviour whiter than Snow, and brighter than the Sun, but you yourſelves ſhall be transfigured with him, and clothed with an exceeding great Glory: The holy Apoſtles ſaw but two Prophets; but you ſhall ſee all the Prophets, all the Patriarchs, Apoſtles, Confeſſors, Martyrs, the holy and bleſſed Virgin, and in general all the Saints that reign

and triumph in Heaven. The Apoſtles had a Sight of this Glory of our Saviour, as of a Flaſh of Lightning; it continued with them but a Moment; for ſoon after they came down from that holy Mountain, and were again expoſed to the ſame Temptations as before, and beſieged by the ſame Calamities. It will be otherwiſe with thee, O Chriſtian Soul, that art flying up to Heaven, from whence thou ſhalt never deſcend, till the great Day of the glorious Reſurrection of our Bodies. Thou ſhalt not be aſſaulted any more by any Temptations. Thou ſhalt have no more Enemies to overcome, nor Bitterneſs to digeſt. Thou art going to reap and enjoy the bleſſed Fruits of thy Saviour's Victories, and to be eternally ſatisfied with the celeſtial Pleaſures that are at the Right-hand of the God of Mercies.

We eſteem St. *John* highly privileged, becauſe the Lord gave him a Sight of his Glory, of the Riches and divine Excellencies of the *New Jeruſalem:* But how much greater is thy Privilege! For that which this holy Apoſtle beheld in a Viſion and a Dream, God will diſcover to thee in Truth and Reality. Let thine Heart liſten, and thou ſhalt hear the Voice of thy Saviour, calling already to thee out of Heaven, as unto his beloved Diſciple, *Come and ſee*; come, my good and faithful Servant; come, my Son (or my Daughter) and I will ſhew thee my glorious and magnificent City; I will ſhew thee the Palace of my Glory, and all the Splendour and State of my Kingdom. Come, and I will expoſe before thine Eyes all my Riches, Treaſures, and my moſt precious Crowns. Come, and I will cauſe the River of living Water, which iſſues from my Throne, to run before thee, and the eternal Delights that proceed from my Face. I ſhall ſhew thee all theſe heavenly Treaſures and Glory, all the angelical Satisfactions, not in the Viſions of the Night, in an Extaſy, in an holy Raviſhment of the Mind, or in a prophetical Elevation of the Soul; but I will diſcover them to thee in Reality

lity and Truth by the Aſſiſtance of a purer and more glorious Light than that of the Sun. I ſhall not only cauſe thee to behold this Glory, theſe Treaſures and Delights, but I will cauſe thee to be a Partaker of them for ever: For as thou haſt pledged me in the Cup of my Bitterneſs and Sorrows, as thou haſt continued with me in my Afflictions, and haſt been faithful unto Death; I will give thee the Kingdom, as the Father hath given it to me. I will give thee the Crown of Life, and will cauſe thee to ſwim in the vaſt Ocean of the eternal Pleaſures. Thou ſhalt not only ſee all my Treaſures, all my Pomp and Glory; thou ſhalt not only behold the Rivers and the Seas of my moſt wonderful Delights, and ſhalt be a Partaker of them; but thou ſhalt ſee me as I am in my Kingdom. I will pull off the Veil that covers me, and ſcatter the Clouds and Miſts that hide me, ſo that thou ſhalt look upon me without Impediment, and behold me Face to Face. Thou ſhalt be transformed into my Likeneſs, and be ſatisfied with my Reſemblance. You ſee therefore Chriſtians, that though Death appears to us dreadful and ill-favoured, we may apply to it what *David* ſaid of *Ahimaaz*, that it is the Meſſenger of good News; notwithſtanding its hideous Veil and Cloak of Darkneſs, we have juſt Cauſe to liken it to the Chariot of Fire, that carried up the Prophet *Elijah* into Heaven.

From what we have ſaid, you may eaſily conclude with the wiſeſt of Kings, *That the Day of our Death is better than the Day of our Birth.* For our Birth makes us Inhabitants of a miſerable Earth; but Death carries us into a Paradiſe of heavenly Delight. Our Birth expoſeth us to ſeveral Encounters; but Death liſts us up upon a Chariot of Triumph. Our Birth forceth us from Crying and Tears; but Death makes us ſing for Joy. Our Birth brings us into the Light; but Death cauſeth us to ſhine as the Sun. Our Birth makes us to live a ſenſual and animal Life, of a ſhort

Continuance; but Death introduces us into a ſpiritual and angelical Life, that ſhall continue for ever. In ſhort, our Birth caſts us into the Arms of Death; but Death leads us to the Well-ſpring of Life.

Therefore the Apoſtle St. *Paul* confeſſeth, that *Chriſt is gain to him both in Life and Death*, Phil. i. 21. And for the ſame Reaſon the Primitive Chriſtians could not endure to ſee any Perſon afflicting himſelf for the Deceaſe of Believers, becauſe it was the Day of their Deliverance, Reſt, Glory, and Happineſs. They commonly forbad all Manner of Mourning; for they judged, that it is not proper that we ſhould clothe ourſelves in Black and Sadneſs, for their Sakes who are clothed in White, and ſhining Garments of Light and Immortality. They looked upon this Life as upon a continual Death; and upon Death as upon the Beginning of a real Life. Therefore they ſtiled the Anniverſary Day of the Martyrs Death, *The Day of their Nativity*. From hence proceed the uſual Songs of Praiſe, which they commonly ſang to perpetuate their bleſſed Memories.

I need not cauſe you to take Notice, *devout Souls!* of the notable Difference between the Death of God's Children, and the Death of the Wicked. It is as great as between Heaven and Earth, between Paradiſe and Hell. *Balaam* had good Cauſe to deſire the one, and fear the Conſequence of the other. We have as much Reaſon to cry out as he did, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my laſt End be like his*, Numb. xxiii.

You have heard how *Adrian*, an Heathen Prince, made his Addreſs to his Soul, *My little Soul, my little Darling, Hoſteſs and Companion of my Body; thou art going to wander up and down in cold, obſcure, and fearful Places; thou ſhalt never delight thyſelf in Jeſting, as thou haſt been wont; thou ſhalt never give me any more Paſtime.* But when the Chriſtian Soul goeth out of this mortal Tabernacle, he may talk to it in another Manner: O my Soul! pleaſant Hoſteſs, and

and heavenly Companion of this weak Body, thou canſt not wander out of thy Way; for thou haſt a faithful and a knowing Guide. Thou art already in the bleſſed Company of Angels that ſhall bear thee upon their Wings; thou art going to a noble Palace, enriched with Light and Glory, and bleſſed with the ſincereſt and moſt heavenly Delights. Thou ſhalt meet with no more Sorrows, Grief, nor Diſpleaſure, which ſo often diſturb thy Quiet here upon Earth; thou ſhalt rejoice for ever with all the glorified Saints, and ſing Songs of Praiſe and Thankſgiving with all the celeſtial Spirits. O my Soul! How great is that Glory and Happineſs which thou mayeſt juſtly expect from thy God, who hath both an infinite Power, and an infinite Mercy and Goodneſs, ſince he hath endeared thee unto himſelf, by giving his own Life to free thee from Death, and eternal Damnation! If your Friends, or rather your Enemies, on this Occaſion, weep and are grieved at your Departure; if they labour, by their Tears and Sighs, to remove your Heart, and to perſuade you to remain yet here below; ſpeak to them as St.*Paul* did to thoſe that wept about his Neck, *What mean ye to weep, and to break my Heart!* Acts xxii. St.*Paul* was then in his Journey to *Jeruſalem*, where he was to be bound, impriſoned, and to be carried to the City of *Rome*, where he was to die upon a ſcaffold, by the Separation of his Head from his Body; notwithſtanding St.*Paul's* Friends comforted themſelves with this expreſſion, *The Will of the Lord be done.* And what mean ye, my Friends! Will ye ſtop me from going up to an Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, at the Gates whereof I muſt caſt off all theſe Chains and Fetters of Mortality? I muſt leave all my Sins, my Sufferings, and Grief. I ſhall enter into a new Glory, into the ever-bleſſed Company of Saints and Angels. If your Love be ſincere and real, prefer my Felicity and Reſt to the ſmall Satisfaction that you find in my Com-

pany here below. Conſider that in the Houſe of my God, and in the Viſion of his glorious Face, I ſhall find every Moment more Joy and Pleaſure, than I ſhould have met with upon Earth in Thouſands of Ages; all the Pomp and Splendour of the World, all the Glory and State, its Riches and Treaſures, its Pleaſures and Delights, are mean and contemptible to thoſe I am going to enjoy in Heaven, as a few Drops of Water to a boundleſs Sea, or as a Flaſh of Lightning to the Noon-day Sun. Muſt the blind Paſſion which you have to enjoy me, hinder me from ſeeing the Face of my God, and heavenly Father? Suppoſe I were now ſhut up with you in ſome dark Dungeon, and bound with the ſame Chain; would you rather ſee me your Companion, to continue in your Miſery and Sufferings, or to behold me at a Diſtance at Liberty, in the Fruition of a perfect Satisfaction? Pretend not that we ſhall never ſee one another any more: For can you be ſo great an Unbeliever, as to doubt of God's Mercy, that intends to bring us together again in Heaven? Death ſeparates us for a Moment; but the Prince of Life will unite us together for ever in his Father's Houſe, whither he is gone to prepare a Place for us. O devout and religious Soul! by ſuch Language as this thou ſhalt be able to mollify the hardeſt Hearts, and prepare them to behold thy Tranſlation into Heaven, as *Eliſha*, when he ſaw his Maſter's Rapture. If they feel any Diſpleaſure and Grief for thy Separation from them, they will have more Joy and Comfort to conſider, with the Eye of Faith, that extraordinary Glory and Happineſs, into which God intends to receive thee, through his infinite Goodneſs and Mercy.

If it happens otherwiſe, and that thou art to deal with weak Minds, whoſe Love is blind, and whoſe Paſſions are ſo unreaſonable as to reſiſt God's Appointment, and hinder thy Promotion to Happineſs; thou muſt overcome by the Strength of God's Grace, and the Aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit, all the furious Reluctances

Reluctances of Nature. Thou muſt imitate St. *Peter*, when he ſaw our Saviour Chriſt in his Transfiguration upon Mount *Tabor*, he forgot his Family, and all the deareſt Enjoyments in the World; therefore in that Exceſs of Joy he cried out, *Lord, it is good for us to be here.* In the ſame Language muſt you ſpeak, Chriſtian Souls. I dare be bold to affirm, if your Mind is raiſed up by Faith in Heaven, to behold Jeſus Chriſt ſhining in Light and Glory, and ſurrounded by all the holy Angels, and immortal Spirits; as ſoon as you ſhall have but the leaſt Reliſh of Paradiſe, you will be ſo raviſhed with that extraordinary Happineſs, that you will eaſily forget the moſt lovely Enjoyments of the Earth, unto which you have devoted your Affections. So that in that tranſport of Joy you will be ready to burſt out in this Language, My Lord, and my God, I am ſick with Love for thee; I wiſh for nothing but for thy glorious preſence; my chief Happineſs is to be with thee, and to behold thy Face, where I ſee already ſo much Light and Love. I confeſs, we ſhall not ſay as St. *Peter*, *Let us build Tabernacles*; for we ſhall never be concerned as Soldiers and Travellers in Fights and Journies. We ſhall not ſay, Let us build an Houſe, that we may dwell with thee and thy bleſſed Company: For I ſee, O God, with the Eye of Faith, the Palace which thou haſt built from the Foundation of the World, where thou haſt prepared a Place for me. Lord, open to me the Gates of this glorious Palace, that I may enter in, and ſing forth thy divine Praiſes.

My dear Friend, ſhall the miſerable Pagans, who never taſted of the Heavenly Gift, who were never made Partakers of the Spirit of Grace, nor of the Powers of the Life to come, the Heathens who were without Hope, and without God in the World; ſhall they march courageouſly to meet Death; and wilt thou, that haſt ſome foretaſtes of the Happineſs of Heaven, and haſt ſeen ſome Beams of its Glory, canſt thou not reſolve to depart out of the World?

Shall a *Seneca*, who hath no other Means to ſtrengthen himſelf but the Perſuaſion of his vain Philoſophy; who hath no Expectation of Advantage of the Life to come, ſhall ſuch an one look with ſtedfaſt Countenance upon his Blood and Life guſhing apace out of his Veins? And thou, my Brother, haſt thou been brought up under the Tuition of an eternal Wiſdom? Doſt thou embrace, by Faith, the Glory and Felicities prepared for thee by God, and art not able to look upon Death with Reſolution and Courage? And canſt not leave the World with Expreſſions of Joy? Shall *Socrates*, whoſe infirm Body was animated by a ſinful Soul, and who had no Manner of Antidotes againſt Death, drink up that Poiſon that was mixed for him, as a pleaſant Potion? And thou, Chriſtian, who art animated by the Spirit of the living God, that ſeals to thee his great and moſt precious Promiſes; thou, Chriſtian, who enjoyeſt the Earneſt of that Inheritance prepared for thee in Heaven; ſhalt not thou be able to ſwallow down, with Content, the Cup that Death holds out to thee! Thou haſt a powerful and an infallible Antidote againſt this Poiſon; for, after this bitter Cup, thou art going where thou ſhalt drink at Leiſure out of the Rivers of eternal Pleaſures. Shall it be ſaid, that in the *Jew's* Houſes, at the Time of Death, the Sound of Inſtruments of Muſic was heard, together with Cryings and Lamentations; and at thy Dwelling, who haſt an Intereſt in Chriſt crucified, and ſeeſt him reigning and triumphing in Heaven, there ſhall be nothing heard but weeping and ſighing, and no praiſing God, nor giving of Thanks?

Finally, In regard ſo many Perſons of all Ages, Sexes, and Conditions, have deſired Death, to be free from all earthly Evils and Calamities, haſt not thou greater Reaſon to wiſh for it heartily, when it ſhall pleaſe God, that thou mayeſt enter into the Fruition of the Advantages and Happineſs of the heavenly Life? How excellent is thy loving Kindneſs, O God! Therefore the Children of Men, or rather thy Children,

dren, the Brothers and Siſters of Jeſus Chriſt, thy well-beloved Son, put their Truſt under the Shadow of thy Wings; they ſhall be fully ſatisfied with the Fatneſs of thy Houſe, and thou ſhalt cauſe them to drink out of the Rivers of thy Pleaſures.

If thou be paſſionately deſirous to taſte of the angelical Delights, and reliſh the Divine Pleaſures, that flow from the Throne of God, and of the Lamb; if you be really athirſt for God; will not you ſpeak in *David's* Language? *Pſal.* xliii. *As the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee, O God; my Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God: When ſhall I come and appear before God?* And elſewhere, Pſal. lxiii. *O God, thou art my God; early will I ſeek thee; my Soul thirſteth for thee, my Fleſh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirſty Land where no Water is, to ſee thy Power and Glory, ſo as I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary.* It is not poſſible to taſte of the Heavenly Joys, but we are conſtrained to cry out as the Man after God's own Heart, *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts! My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the Courts of the Lord; my Heart and my Fleſh crieth out for the living God*, Pſal. lxxxiv.

Conſider well, believing Soul, what vaſt Difference there was between the earthly *Jeruſalem* for which *David* was ſo paſſionate, and the heavenly *Jeruſalem* where God intends to receive thee. What great Diſproportion was there between the little Stream of *Shilo*, and the large River of Paradiſe; between the material Tabernacle, the Mercy-ſeat covered over with fine Gold, upon which the *Cherubims* ſtretched out their Wings; and the immaterial Sanctuary of Heaven, of Jeſus Chriſt the true Ark of the Covenant, in whom are hid the richeſt Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, in whom the Fulneſs of the Godhead dwells bodily, and in whoſe glorious Preſence the *Seraphims* cover their Faces with their Wings! *Col.* ii. How contemptible were the Sacrifices, Oblations and Burnt-offerings of the Children

of *Iſrael*, in Compariſon of the ſpiritual Sacrifices that are preſented to God in Heaven, in Compariſon of the Offerings burning there intire in the Flames of an holy Zeal, and of a perfect Charity! And what was all the Frankincenſe of *Arabia*, and the ſweet Smells of the *Holy Land*, which were conſumed in God's Preſence, if compared with the ſacred Perfumes that mount up out of the golden Phials that are in the Hands of all the Members of the glorified Church! Since *David* eſteems a Door-keeper of the Houſe of the Lord an happy Man on Earth, how great ſhall thy Glory be, and extraordinary thy Happineſs, O believing Chriſtian! For thou art going to be advanced to the moſt honourable Room of that celeſtial Dwelling, which God hath built with his own Hands. To this Purpoſe, our Lord Jeſus hath made thee this gracious Promiſe, *Him that overcometh will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out, and I will write upon him the Name of my God, and the Name of the City of my God, which is the new* Jeruſalem, *which cometh down out of Heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new Name*, Rev. iii. 12. If this great King was ſo deſirous to hear the *Levites* ſinging the Praiſes of God with their Tongues and Inſtruments of Muſic; how much more paſſionate ſhould we be to hear the Harmonies of Heaven, and celeſtial Hymns of the Holy Angels, Archangels, Cherubims, Seraphims, and of the glorified Saints, who have in their Mouths every one a new Song, the Song of *Moſes*, and of the Lamb!

When the Shepherds heard ſome few Expreſſions of the Angels Songs, who praiſed God at the Nativity of the Son of God, they began to rejoice with an exceeding great Joy, that they left their Flocks, and ran in Haſte to look upon the Child Jeſus in the Manger of *Bethlehem*. And thou, devout Soul, thou heareſt already the ſweet Anthems of Paradiſe, and the raviſhing Concerts of Thouſands of Angels; thou knoweſt that thy Saviour ſits there upon a Throne clothed with Glory,

Glory, and divine Majeſty: And wilt thou not forſake all the baſe Employments of this ſenſual and animal Life, to go and ſee this wonderful Saviour, who expects thee, and intends that thou ſhalt ſit alſo with him upon his Throne?

Zaccheus climbed up upon a *Sycamore-tree*, with an earneſt Deſire to behold the Lord Jeſus as he paſſed by, when he was in a State of Humiliation and Abaſement: Shouldſt not thou be as earneſt, O Chriſtian Soul, to fly up above the Heavens, to ſee this merciful Saviour in the State of his Glory and Elevation, and to have him always in thine Eye for ever and ever? When our Lord was come into the Houſe of this poor Publican, he told him, *That Salvation was that Day come to his Houſe:* And ſhalt not thou, O bleſſed Soul, have more Reaſon to ſay, when thou ſhalt enter into the Palace of this glorified Redeemer, *I am this Day entering into my Salvation, and my Glory?*

We highly eſteem *Jacob's* Happineſs, when he was in *Bethel*, becauſe God appeared to him in that admirable Viſion mentioned in the xxviiith of *Geneſis*; but if thou art an *Iſraelite* without Fraud, I eſteem thee to be in a more happy and a more bleſſed State. Thou haſt more Reaſon to break out in *Jacob's* Language, *This is God's Houſe, and the Gate of Heaven. Jacob* ſaw the Heavens open, but he was not admitted into them at that Time; but now God opens theſe Heavens to receive and lodge thee for ever. The holy Angels of God went up and down the Ladder, that reached up from the Earth to Heaven, but they left *Jacob* at the Bottom of this Ladder; whereas the Angels that are about thee are come down to cauſe thee to aſcend up with them, or rather to carry thee up in their Hands, and bring thee to Chriſt, typified with this myſterious Ladder. *Jacob* ſaw God at the Top of this Ladder, but he was to go afterwards to *Padan-Aram*; he was to travel up and down, to ſuffer many Inconveniencies, the Heat of the Day, the Froſt of the Night, the Diſpleaſure of his Father-in-law, and his Treachery; he was to fly from

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the Cruelty of his Brother *Esau*; nay, more than that, he was forced to struggle and wrestle with God himself: Whereas here is now the End of thy Pilgrimage, of all thy Troubles and Encounters. Thou shalt never feel the burning and scorching Heat of thy Afflictions. Thou shalt be no more tortured with the Fears and Apprehensions that now congeal thy Blood: Thou shalt no more stand upon thy Guard for Fear of Deceits, and violent Dealings of Men. Thou shalt wrestle no more with God by Prayers, Supplications, and Tears; for they shall be no more in Use. God shall load thee with his most extraordinary Blessings, and bestow Himself upon thee.

The Prophet *Moses* wished very passionately to see but for a Moment God's Face, whereof he had beheld so many glorious Expressions: And shouldst not thou desire as passionately to see that beautiful and ever-shining Countenance in its Glory and Splendour? O religious Soul, who art inflamed with divine Affection, God will shortly gratify thy Desires: So that thou mayest say to him as one of the Prophets, *Thou shalt cause me to know the Way of Life; in thy Face is the Fulness of Joy, and at thy Right-Hand are Pleasures for evermore.*

Christian if thou hadst but as much Faith and Assurance, as there is Glory and Happiness in Heaven; with what Excess of Joy wouldst thou leave the World, and all its Vanities, to ascend up to the magnificent Palace, purchased for thee with the precious Blood of thy Redeemer!

Jonathan's Eyes were once enlightened, when he tasted some Honey with the End of his Rod, which he had found in a Rock; and thou, Believer, if thou hast by Faith tasted the divine sweetness that proceeds from Christ, the Rock of Eternity, thine Understanding will be all enlightened. Thou shalt need no other Consolation against Death; for Death itself shall fill thee full of Consolation, and real Joy; so that thou shalt have Cause not to speak only as *Jacob*, *O God, I expect*

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thy Salvation, Gen. xlix. but as King *David*, *I was glad when they ſaid unto me, Let us go up into the Houſe of the Lord; our Feet ſhall ſtand within thy Gates O Jeruſalem*, Pſal. cxxii. By this Means thou ſhalt not only expect with Patience, and embrace with Joy, the bleſſed News of this glorious Salvation; but thou ſhalt endeavour to haſten its Coming by thy continual and repeated Sighs. O my God, when wilt thou ſtretch out to me from above thy glorious Arms? When ſhall I ſee plainly thy divine and glorious Face? When wilt thou cauſe me to drink out of the Rivers of Pleaſures? How bleſſed is the Man whom thou haſt choſen and taken to thyſelf, to dwell for ever in thy Courts! Such ſhall be ſatisfied with the good Things of thy Houſe, and of thy glorious Palace.

Joſeph marched out of his Priſon in Haſte, to go to the Palace of the King of *Egypt*; and haſt not thou as much Reaſon to make as much Haſte out of the Priſon of this wretched Body, O believing Soul, that thou mayeſt aſcend up to the Palace of the King of Kings, who intends to inſtal thee into ſuch a glorious State, in Compariſon of which, all the Pomp of *Pharaoh*, and of all the Kings and Princes of the Earth, is nothing but as the Hoar-froſt of the Night.

Bartimeus forſakes willingly his Mantle to creep to the Lord Jeſus, when he called him; and thou, Chriſtian Soul, wilt not thou leave this Body, which is as a troubleſome Garment to thee, to aſcend up to this Divine Saviour, who intends to cure thee of all thy Diſtempers and Diſeaſes; and who purpoſes to load thee with his Bleſſings, and unſpeakable Favours? He will not only bring thee to behold the refreſhing Light of Heaven; but he will alſo cauſe thee to ſhine as the Sun for ever and ever.

Religious Soul, caſt off this ſpotted Garment of the Fleſh; and ſo much the more chearfully, becauſe God holds out in his Hand a Garment of Light and Glory, which he will beſtow upon thee. For it ſhall happen to thee as to the Prophet *Elijah*, who having

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let fall his Mantle, he found himself all encompassed about with Flames of Fire, and an extraordinary Light. As soon as thou shalt cast off this miserable Body, thou shalt be surrounded with celestial Flames, in which thou shalt mount up to Heaven into the Dwelling of Immortality, where thou shalt be like God, who clothes himself with Light as with a Garment. To this Purpose the Words of the Prophet *Zechariah* concerning the High-Priest *Joshua*, are very proper; he was arrayed with filthy Garments, but an Angel from Heaven calls to them that waited before him; *Take away the filthy Garments from him, and clothe him with Change of Raiment; let them set a fair Mitre upon his Head:* This, O Christian Soul, is the true Image of thy Condition at thy Departure, and the lively Portraiture of thy future Happiness. At present thou art clothed with a Body undermined by Sickness and Labour; thou beareſt about thee the Relicks of the old Man; but, behold, God calls to thee from his holy Sanctuary, Take away from him this old Garment, pluck off all Remains of his old Clothing bespotted with Sin, where the Devil's Image is yet to be seen, and give him the sacred Ornaments of a royal Priesthood; clothe his Soul with a long Garment whitened in the Blood of the Lamb; gird it about with the Ephod of Righteousness; put upon its Head an incorruptible Crown, and in its Hand a golden Phial, that it may for ever offer up the heavenly Perfumes in Company of the glorified Saints.

If, after all this, O Christian! thou doubtest of the Felicity and Glory of such as die in the Lord Jesus, hear what an Apostle saith, who was himself ravished up into the third Heaven, where he beheld in this glorious Palace unspeakable Things; *We know, that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desireing to be clothed upon with our House which is from Heaven; if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked;*

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for we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that Mortality might be ſwallowed up of Life. And liſten to what the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *Bleſſed are the Dead that die in the Lord, for ſo ſaith the Spirit; for they reſt from their Labours, and their Works follow them.*

Would to God, that we had ſome other Word, beſides that of Death, to expreſs the wonderful and happy Change that we make when we go out of this miſerable World! For, to ſpeak properly, we cannot be ſaid *to die*, when we leave a Place full of Miſery, to enter into another bleſſed with endleſs Felicity; when we exchange a laborious State for a peacable and happy Reſt; when we come off from a cruel War to enjoy the Pleaſures of everlaſting Joys; when we paſs through Death to an endleſs Life; and forſake a Tomb, to mount up upon a Throne. Chriſtian Soul, remember thy Beginning, and thine End; conſider what thou art, from whence thou proceedeſt, and whither thou goeſt. Thou art a living Image of thy Creator, and a Beam of Glory; thou art of a celeſtial and immortal Nature. God hath waſhed and cleanſed thee in the Blood of his Lamb, without Spot, or Blemiſh, and ſanctified thee by his Holy Spirit. He hath brought thee to a Diſpoſition fit to enter into his holy City, and he is ready to admit thee to the Fruition of his Glory; *thou haſt fought a good Fight, finiſhed thy Courſe, and kept the Faith*; it is therefore high Time that thou ſhouldſt receive the Crown of Life. Thou haſt this precious Crown already in thy Hands. Thou art at the Gate of Heaven, at the entrance of Paradiſe.

O therefore, O believing Soul! Go with Joy and Gladneſs to this great God, that calls thee; to this merciful Saviour, that ſtretcheth forth his Hands to thee, and opens his Boſom to receive thee. Go into the glorious Company of Angels and bleſſed Spirits. Take upon thee theſe beautiful Robes of Light, with which thine heavenly Father will clothe thy Nakedneſs;

neſs; and accept this immortal Crown, that he offers to thee. Go, and ſatisfy thyſelf with the Bread of the Kingdom of Heaven, and remove thy Thirſt with the cryſtal Waters of that *River of Pleaſure which proceeds from the Throne of God, and of the Lamb.* Go and behold the Face of the Father of Lights; be happy with his divine Reſemblance, and be transformed into his glorious Image.

O bleſſed Soul! Seeſt thou not already the Heavens open, and Jeſus Chriſt at the Right-Hand of God the Father, holding out his Hand to thee, offering to receive thee into his glorious Reſt! Seeſt thou not the Angels of Heaven (clothed in white Raiment) coming to tranſport thee out of this miſerable State? Seeſt thou not how thou art already encompaſſed about with Light, and celeſtial Flames? Doſt thou not reliſh the Sweetneſs of Paradiſe? Is there not an Heaven already in thine Heart? Heareſt thou not the Hymns of the glorified Spirits? Hath not the Lord cauſed thee to underſtand that ſweet and comfortable Voice ſounding in thine Ear, *Verily, I ſay unto thee, thou ſhalt be this Day with me in Paradiſe. Come, good and faithful Servant; enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord!* Feeleſt thou not thyſelf lifted up above all earthly and periſhing Things? Doſt thou not fly upon the Wings of Faith and Repentance to the Throne of God's Glory? Doſt thou not caſt thyſelf into Paradiſe, into the Arms of Almighty God, into the Boſom of the Lord Jeſus, to reſt there for ever, and to be ſatisfied with the good Things which *Eye hath not ſeen, Ear hath not heard,* and which are not *entered into the Heart of Man,* but which *God hath prepared for them that love him?*

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation of a Chriſtian Soul, which prepares to depart out of its Body, and comforts itſelf in the Contemplation of the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe.

O GOD! the Author of my Being, and the Sovereign Lord of my Life, thou ſeeſt all the Motions and Diſpoſitions of my Soul! Thou knoweſt that I have wholly reſigned myſelf into thy Hands, and deſire nothing elſe but to depend upon thy good Pleaſure; ſpeak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth; here I am to do thy Will, O God. As the Iſraelites *waited for the Motion and Order to remove their Camp; ſo I am as ready at thy Command to leave this earthly Tabernacle. And as the golden Cherubims were always upon their Feet, their Wings ſtretched out, and their Faces towards the Mercy-ſeat; in like Manner, I deſire to be in a Poſture to take my Flight up to thy Mercy-ſeat, to my Lord Jeſus, the Propitiation for my Sins, as ſoon as thou ſhalt ſtretch forth thine Hand unto me, to take me out of this troubled Sea, and out of this dark Night of Affliction. I am as willing to go to thee, bleſſed Saviour, and to leave my ragged Garments behind, as blind* Bartimeus, *or as* Elijah, *to caſt off this Mantle of the Fleſh, that I may aſcend unto thee in a bright Chariot of Fire. I am not grieved to quit this earthly Tabernacle; for thou haſt prepared for me a more laſting Dwelling in Heaven. Let my Body return to the Duſt from whence it proceeds, ſo that mine immortal Being, a Beam of thy Glory, may be admitted into thy Favour, Mercy, and Preſence, unto which it deſires to return. I doubt not of thy gracious Reception of it, ſince thou haſt promiſed to give the Crown of Life to all ſuch as perſevere in thy Faith and Fear; and the Rewards of Immortality, to ſuch as fight under thy Banner, and overcome Satan, Sin, and the World. By thy Grace and Power, I have vanquiſhed theſe Enemies of my Salvation, and have no other to contend with but Death. O*

ſtrengthen me with thy Holy Spirit, that I may conquer this laſt Enemy, that I may find by it a Paſſage to thine eternal Glory and Happineſs. I truſt upon thy fatherly Goodneſs, and unchangeable Affection, upon that intimate Relation with which I am honoured, and am confident thou wilt not forſake me in my urgent Neceſſity and Agony. Send to me thy good Angels that they may carry me upon their Wings, and introduce me to thy heavenly Kingdom, and may ſee thy Salvation complete. I long to be with thee in thy celeſtial Jeruſalem, *and enter into thy holy Sanctuary, into the Society of the glorified Saints, and immortal Spirits, that miniſter before thy Throne. I am ſenſible of thy ſaving Grace beſtowed upon me, and mine Affections are already ſeparated from the World; at preſent all my Thoughts and Expectations are with thee, my good God. Receive me into thy magnificent Palace, that I may ſee thy Face in Glory, and embrace my bleſſed Redeemer. And before I go hence, ſpeak to my Soul in a Language anſwerable to its vehement Longings, and let me hear this comfortable Saying, This Day thou ſhalt be with me in Paradiſe. I am already ſenſible of that Joy, that expects me in thy Preſence, where it ſhall be full and complete; of that Peace and Happineſs, into which I am going apace. I have already the Fore-taſte of thy heavenly Pleaſures, which muſt needs exceed all that we can ſay or think. I ſee the Heavens open, and my Lord Jeſus ready to receive me. Into thy Hands I commit my Spirit; for thou haſt redeemed it.* Amen.

CHAP. XXIII.

The Eleventh Conſolation. *The glorious Reſurrection of our Bodies.*

WHEN God created Angels, he gave them a ſpiritual, and altogether celeſtial Nature, that had no Affinity with Matter. I confeſs, that theſe

theſe heavenly Spirits have often appeared in human Bodies to the ancient Patriarchs; But thoſe Bodies were extraordinary and miraculouſly formed by the Power of Almighty God for ſuch Occaſions. Beſides, thoſe holy Spirits were not in thoſe Bodies as the Soul is in ours, quickening and animating them in the ſame Manner; but only as the Pilot is in the Ship that he governs. Therefore as ſoon as they had fulfilled the Work about which they were employed by God, they left thoſe Bodies without Prejudice to their Beings, as the Pilot leaves and goes out of the Ship when he hath brought it to the deſired Haven. All the Happineſs of theſe glorified Spirits conſiſts in this, that God hath confirmed them in his Grace and Love, and admitted them for ever to a continual Contemplation of his glorious Face. It is not ſo with our Souls; for although they be alſo ſpiritual, and of an heavenly Subſtance, God hath not created them to be alone, and to ſubſiſt at a Diſtance from all Matter, but to live in the pleaſant Company of thoſe elemental Bodies, which he hath faſhioned in a moſt artificial Manner. When he creates an human Soul, and conveys it into an organized Body, it is not that it ſhould be there as Water in a Veſſel, or as a King in his Palace; it lives not there as an aſſiſting Form, or as an outward Cauſe of the Body's Operations; but it is united to it by a very ſtrict Union, and ſerves as an eſſential Form. It is the Principle of our Life, the eternal Cauſe of Motion, of Senſe, and of Underſtanding. So that, to ſpeak properly, Man cannot be ſaid to be altogether of a ſpiritual Nature, as the holy Angels; nor a ſingle Body, as the Sun and Stars; but he is made up of both. Therefore, if our Souls wiſh to depart out of this earthly Tabernacle, it is not out of any Hatred of it as it is in itſelf and its proper Nature; for none ever hated his own Body; every one ſeeks to nouriſh and cheriſh it; but by Accident, becauſe of the Vanity and Corruption to which Sin hath enthralled it, we deſire earneſtly to depart out of it to a Place where Righteouſneſs and

true Holineſs reign, that we might be with the Lord Jeſus, to behold him nearer. It is therefore an undoubted Truth, that unleſs the Body partakes of the ſame Happineſs and Glory as the Soul, Man cannot be ſaid to be perfectly and intirely happy. I confeſs, it is a great Joy to us, to know that when our Soul caſts off this earthly Body it enters into the eternal Dwellings of Heaven, whither it goes to behold the Face of the Father of Lights; but this holy Joy is diſturbed with ſad Reflections, and this heavenly Sweetneſs is ſtrangely altered with the bitter Conſiderations of this poor Body caſt into the Earth, and left to the Mercy of the crawling Worms. For it is a moſt hateful Thing to view our Body rotting and turning to Aſhes; that Body that was our Pavilion, our Palace; nay, more than ſo, that was half Part of ourſelves. Therefore, if we will render our Joy accompliſhed, and apply an effectual Comfort to our Souls, we muſt nouriſh and entertain this pleaſant Aſſurance, that the Ruin of our Bodies, for which we lament ſo much, ſhall not be eternal; but as our Body falls down by Death, it ſhall riſe again one Day at the general Reſurrection. This is one of the nobleſt and moſt excellent Myſteries of our Chriſtian Religion, and one of its moſt glorious Advantages. The Wiſdom of the World, with all its Reaſonings, and the Heathen Philoſophy, with its rareſt Subtilties, could never attain to this wholſome and comfortable Doctrine. Therefore, when St. *Paul* preached to the Council of *Athens*, he was heard with Admiration, until he had ſpoken to them of the Reſurrection; as ſoon as he began to mention that, they laughed at him.

Therefore, while *human Reaſon* remains in its Darkneſs, and *natural Ignorance*, it cannot of itſelf find out this glorious Myſtery. But as ſoon as it is enlightened with the *Light* from *above*, it diſcovers the moſt remarkable Circumſtances, and acknowledgeth the *Juſtice* and *Neceſſity* of the *future Reſurrection* of our Bodies.

Firſt,

Firſt, Since Rewards and Puniſhments ought to be proportionable and anſwerable to Him who is to puniſh and reward, we muſt of Neceſſity believe the Reſurrection of our Body; otherwiſe the Pains of the Wicked cannot be extreme, and the Happineſs of the Godly can never be abſolute and perfect.

Secondly, As, when a Traitor is executed, Men are wont to faſten to the Scaffold, or to burn in the Fire the Inſtruments and Tools with which he had aſſaulted or offended his Prince; in the ſame Manner, the Bodies of the profane and impious Varlets, of the Traitors againſt God's Divine Majeſty, ought to be treated; they ought to be eternally puniſhed with their Souls in Hell-Fire, becauſe they have been the unhappy Inſtruments employed in affronting their Creator.

Thirdly, The Body is not only the Inſtrument employed by the Wicked againſt God, but encourageth them, and hurries them on in Sin. For its Humours ſtir it up, inflame, and carry it to evil Acts. For Example, its ſanguine Conſtitution makes it luxurious, and inclinable to the filthy Luſts of the Fleſh; its Choler hurries it to violent and furious Actions; its Melancholy prompts it to the moſt horrid and helliſh Attempts. So that if ſuch are to be puniſhed who cauſe us to perform heinous Deeds, as well as the Actors, it belongs to God's Juſtice to inflict upon the Body, as well as upon the Soul, eternal Puniſhments.

Fourthly, *To every Thing there is a Seaſon, and a Time to every Purpoſe under the Heavens.* Eccleſ. iii. As the Bodies of the Wicked and Reprobate have had their good Things and Satisfactions during this Life, they muſt needs have alſo in another Life their Puniſhments and Torments.

Fifthly, But, not to forget the Reaſons which have a Relation to the Faithful, and which are the Pillars and Supporters of our Faith and Hope; we may ſay, that Jeſus Chriſt is no leſs able to ſave us, than *Adam*

was to deſtroy us. Now *Adam* having loſt both Soul and Body, we muſt conclude, that it belongs to Chriſt to ſave them both. Therefore the Body is to riſe again, that it may partake of that Salvation or Redemption procured to us by this great Saviour.

Sixthly, *As we have borne the Image of the firſt Man, who was of the Duſt of the Earth, we muſt alſo bear the Image of the ſecond Man, who came from Heaven*, 1 Cor. xv. Now we bear not this Image at preſent in this Life; we therefore muſt bear it in another.

Seventhly, God hath not made a Covenant with Part of Man, but with all Man, compoſed of Soul and Body. The Body muſt therefore needs riſe again, that it might partake of the eternal Fruits of Glory and Happineſs, which are promiſed to us by his divine *Covenant*.

Eighthly, God is not only ſtyled *the Father of Spirits, and the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh*, Heb. xii. *but he declares himſelf to be the God of* Abraham *and of his Poſterity*, Exod. iii. 6. He is not only the God of the Soul; or the God of the Body alone; but he is the God of believing Perſons, of both their Souls and Bodies. From hence it neceſſarily follows, that the Bodies of ſuch as are deceaſed, are not utterly deſtroyed; for God will raiſe them up again. With this Argument Chriſt ſtopped the Mouths of the *Sadducees*, who denied the Reſurrection: *Concerning the Reſurrection of the Dead*, ſaid he, *Have you not read what God himſelf ſpeaks to you? I am the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob: *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living*.

Ninthly, God hath adopted us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, according to the good Pleaſure of his Will, to make us the Heirs of his Kingdom, and Coheirs of his Son. From this Paſſage we may gather a certain Aſſurance of the Reſurrection; for when this Father of Mercies ſhall ſee our Bodies lying in the Duſt, out of his Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, he will ſay, Theſe are the Bodies of my Children, the Members of mine only

only Son. It is not convenient to leave them always in that ſhameful State, in the Bowels of the Earth. That Love that I bear to them cannot ſuffer it. Doubtleſs it was this Conſideration that cauſed the Apoſtle to call the Redemption of our Bodies, *Adoption*; for by that he aſſures us, that he ſhall fetch out of their Graves the Bodies of all them whom he hath adopted; and that our future Reſurrection is an Effect, and a neceſſary Conſequence, of our Adoption.

Tenthly, If we conſider Death in itſelf, as it is in its own Nature, we ſhall find it to be the Wages of Sin, and a Puniſhment of our Crimes. Now Jeſus Chriſt hath paid for us theſe Wages, and ſatisfied for all our Sins, aboliſhing them in his Croſs. We may therefore conclude, that Death is to be deſtroyed in reſpect of Believers, and that their Bodies muſt needs riſe again.

Eleventhly, St. *Paul* aſſures us that Jeſus Chriſt *is the Saviour of his Body*. Now the myſtical Body of this great God and Redeemer conſiſts not only in the infinite Number of Souls purchaſed with his Blood, but alſo in the Union of all Bodies, that have been the Companions of theſe bleſſed Souls: Therefore as he hath ſaved our Souls from ſpiritual Death, and eternal Damnation, he muſt alſo ſave our Bodies from corporal Death, and redeem them from the Power of the Grave.

Twelfthly, If Death did for ever detain our Bodies in the Grave, we could not ſay, to ſpeak properly, that our Saviour hath ſwallowed up Death in Victory, and that he hath deſtroyed the Sepulchre; for, in ſuch a Caſe, Death and the Grave would remain victorious, and triumph eternally over theſe miſerable Bodies.

Thirteenthly, Our Saviour hath ſuffered in his Soul, and in his Body; and by that means hath purchaſed to himſelf both our Souls and Bodies, according to St. *Paul's* excellent Intimation, *You are bought with a Price; glorify therefore God in your Bodies, and in your Souls,*

that belong unto God: From hence we muſt conclude that this glorious Saviour would be deprived of Part of that which he hath purchaſed by his ineſtimable Sufferings, if our Bodies always continued in the Power of Death.

Fourteenthly, the Holy Ghoſt hath ſanctified our Bodies, and made them his Temples, as St. *Paul* teacheth us, *Know ye not, that you are the Temples of God, and that the Holy Ghoſt dwelleth in you?* From hence the Reſurrection of our Bodies muſt needs follow as a neceſſary Conſequence. For can we imagine, that God will ſuffer the Temple of his Holineſs to continue for ever in its Ruins and Deſolations? Will he not rear up again the noble Pavilion of his Glory, caſt down by Death?

Fifteenthly, God hath predeſtinated us to make us conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the Firſt-born, amongſt many Brethren. Now the Soul and the Body of this Only-begotten of the Father, that were ſeparated by Death, have been joined again in his glorious Reſurrection, and received into Heaven. Therefore our Souls, that depart out of the World to enter into Paradiſe, muſt return again to their Bodies, that we may aſcend up to Heaven both in Soul and Body. All the Difference that appears between Chriſt and us, is, that the precious Body of our noble Captain could not be ſubject to Corruption, but was raiſed again as ſoon as it fell, becauſe of that ſtrict and perſonal Union between his Humanity and Divinity; whereas the moſt Part of all other Bodies are corrupted, and reduced to Aſhes.

Sixteenthly, We have the ſame Holy Spirit, and divine Virtue, dwelling in us, which was in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the efficient Cauſe of his Reſurrection, altho' not in the ſame Meaſure and Degree; therefore it will produce in us the ſame Effect, and raiſe our Bodies alſo from the Duſt. St. *Paul* makes uſe of this Reaſon, in the viiith of the *Romans*, *If the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the Dead, dwell in you; he that*

that raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead, ſhall alſo quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Seventeenthly, The dead Body that touched the Bones of the Prophet *Eliſha*, revived again on a ſudden. We have more Cauſe to expect the Reſurrection of our Bodies, becauſe our Bodies do not only touch Jeſus Chriſt, dead and riſen again, but we are become one Body with him, Fleſh of his Fleſh, and Bone of his Bone: *I am* (ſaid he) *the Reſurrection and the Life; he that liveth and believeth in me, ſhall never die; and he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet ſhall he live*, John xi. 25, 26.

Eighteenthly, God hath imprinted upon our Bodies his own Signet, and the Marks of his Love; he hath given them viſible and palpable Aſſurances of their future Bleſſedneſs. Under the *Old Teſtament*, Believers carried the *Seal* of the *Covenant* of God in their Fleſh; for Circumciſion was the Seal of the Righteouſneſs obtained by Faith, and Hope of the bleſſed Immortality. They alſo are the Fleſh of the Paſchal Lamb, which was a Type of Jeſus Chriſt the true Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World. Likewiſe, under the *new Covenant*, God conſecrates to himſelf our Bodies by the *Water of Baptiſm*, and by the *Bread* and *Wine* of the *Lord's Supper:* So by this Means he aſſures them of a joyful and glorious Reſurrection. For if by eating of this Bread, and drinking of this Wine, we eat and drink ſpiritually the Fleſh and Blood of Jeſus Chriſt, it is an infallible Aſſurance, that this Divine Saviour will raiſe us up again at the End of the World, as he himſelf promiſeth; *Whoſo eateth my Fleſh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal Life, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt Day*, John vi. 54.

Nineteenthly, The Body of a Believer endures many Aſſaults and Evils for Chriſt's Sake, and for his holy Profeſſion. It is often expoſed to the moſt ſhameful and moſt cruel Torments, and partakes in the ſame Sufferings as he did on Earth. Therefore it is juſt, that it ſhould partake in his Triumphs, Glory, and eternal Happineſs.

Happineſs. *It is a faithful Saying; for if we be dead with him, we ſhall alſo live with him; if we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with him. We always bear about in our Bodies the dying of our Lord Jeſus, that the Life of Jeſus might be made manifeſt in our mortal Fleſh*, 2Tim. ii. 2 Cor. iv.

Twentiethly, There is nothing that God doth in vain; he never beſtows upon us uſeleſs Deſires; therefore to what Purpoſe hath he kindled in us ſuch an earneſt longing to ſee this wretched Body out of the Miſery and Corruption unto which Sin hath ſubjected it, and in the Fruition of Glory and Immortality? As St. *Paul* tells us in theſe Words, *The Creature was made ſubject to Vanity, not willingly, but by reaſon of him who hath ſubjected the ſame in Hope, becauſe the Creature itſelf alſo ſhall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God.* He adds immediately after, *For we know that the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth in Pain together until now; and not only they but ourſelves alſo, which have the Firſt-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourſelves groan within ourſelves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit the Redemption of our Body*, Rom. viii.

Finally, Since whatſoever God hath appointed in his eternal Counſel, muſt be fulfilled in Time, and all Things in the world attain to thoſe Ends for which he made them; and ſince he created our Souls not to be alone, but to live in the Company and Fellowſhip with the Body; therefore this Body, which falls down by Death, muſt needs riſe again at the Reſurrection, that the immortal Soul might return to, and dwell with it for ever.

To ſay that the Reſurrection of our Bodies is impoſſible, is the greateſt and moſt abominable Atheiſm in the World. It is Impudence to deny the infinite Power of God, and the ſacred Hiſtory of the World's Creation. For if Things are in their Beings, as they are in Workings, and if their Operations are correſpondent to their Natures, we muſt of Neceſſity conclude that if there be a God of an infinite Being, he muſt needs have a Power anſwerable to his Being; and

and by Conſequence, that this Almighty God may without Difficulty raiſe the Dead. If thou believeſt, that God calls the Things that are not, as if they were, wherefore doſt thou not alſo believe, that this ſame God will alſo call the Things that have been already, to reſtore them to that Being which they have formerly enjoyed from his Almighty Hand? If thou believeſt, that God hath faſhioned *Eve* out of one of her Huſband's Ribs, that he made Man of the Duſt, and created this Duſt out of nothing, canſt thou not alſo believe, that God is able at the Day of the Reſurrection to make again thy Body of that Duſt into which it is reduced by Death? If thou believeſt, that God hath breathed into *Adam's* Noſtrils the Breath of Life, that he hath created thy Soul, and infuſed it into thy Body, where it was never before, how canſt thou queſtion his Power of returning one Day, the ſame Soul into the ſame Body, where it formerly made its Abode? In ſhort if thou believeſt, that the Holy Ghoſt, by moving upon the Waters, hath cauſed ſo many beautiful and noble Creatures to appear, and that he hath made Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs, canſt thou not be alſo perſuaded, that this ſame Holy Ghoſt can ſhew his Power amongſt the Graves, and fetch the Body out of the dark ſhadows of Death, to introduce it into the Light of the Living?

Thou ſeeſt by Experience, that every Day a new Houſe is built up of old Materials; and doſt thou wonder how the wiſe Architect, who hath built the great World by his Word alone, can gather up the old Pieces and Materials of this little World, to make up a new Building, adorned with divine graces and Beauty? Shall the Statue-maker be able to reſtore again his bruiſed Image reduced to Aſhes, and ſhall not God be able to reſtore Man, created after his own Image and Likeneſs, to his primitive ſtate and Being? In a Word, let the Difficulties ſeem never ſo great, remember (Chriſtian Soul) what the Angel *Gabriel* told the bleſſed Virgin, *With God nothing ſhall be impoſſible.*

I know

I know very well, that this is an old Maxim in Philoſophy. *From Privation of the Habit there is no returning.* That is to ſay, when once we are deprived of, and have loſt a natural Faculty, it is never to be recovered again. But the profane Atheiſts wrongfully abuſe this Maxim againſt the Article of our Reſurrection; for it is moſt true in reſpect of natural and ſecondary Cauſes. It is not to be doubted, that when the Faculties of Nature are once loſt, they are not to be reſtored by human Art or Skill; and when a Man is dead, it is not poſſible for all the Creatures to bring him to Life again: But nothing is able to limit the Power of an infinite Agent. He that hath formed the wonderful Eye, and in whom we live, move, and have our Being; cannot he open the Eyes of a Man born blind, and reſtore Life to a dead Corpſe? This ſame Philoſopher, whereof the Maxims are brought againſt the Reſurrection, declares openly, *That God can do all Things that imply no Contradiction.* Now there is no Contradiction in believing that God can render Life to him that had loſt it; and that what is fallen down by Death, ſhould riſe again by the Reſurrection. To the end that this Reſurrection of our Bodies might ſeem leſs ſtrange, God hath been pleaſed to give us in Nature many Images and Reſemblances. I am perſuaded, believing Souls, that you will not be diſpleaſed, if I mention here ſome of the Chief.

Firſt, As when the Sun goeth down, and the Earth is covered with the dark Shadows of the Night, Man's declining, and the Darkneſs of the Grave is repreſented; likewiſe, when this King of the Stars riſes, when he brings with him the Day over our Heads there is a beautiful and perfect Image of the Reſurrection.

Secondly, When the Moon parts with all its Light and Splendour, which it borrows from the Sun, when it covers itſelf with a Veil of Darkneſs, it is the Image of Death, and a Repreſentation of that Veil which it draws over our Eyes; but when the Sun

begins to look upon it again, and by that Means it recovers its former Brightneſs and Glory, it diſcovers before our Eyes, in a Manner that which ſhall happen to our Bodies, when the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhall riſe and caſt upon them his favourable Aſpect.

Thirdly, The Spring, Summer, and Autumn follow one another, and the Winter ſhews us an Image of Death. But when the Sun begins to return again over our Heads, when it covers the Earth with a beautiful Green, and revives the ſleeping Virtue of Nature, it expreſſeth to us the Reſurrection in lively Colours.

Fourthly, The Trees that are in Winter without Flowers, Fruits, or Leaves, diſcover to us the hideous Aſpect of Death, that ſtrips Man's Body, and deprives him of all that is beautiful and pleaſant to the Eye. But when the ſame Trees flouriſh again, and are loaden with freſh Leaves and Fruits, they put us in mind of the bleſſed Reſurrection of our Bodies.

Fifthly, The ſeeds that corrupt and rot in the Ground, repreſent our Bodies rotting in the Grave; but when the Seeds appear above Ground and flouriſh they expreſs excellently well the bleſſed State of our Bodies, riſing again to a new Life, and recovering a perfect Beauty. This Similitude the Son of God himſelf recommends to us: *If a Grain of Wheat, which falls to the Earth, doth not die, it remains alone; but if it dies it brings forth much Fruit*, John xii. And the Apoſtle St. *Paul* inſiſts at large upon this Compariſon; thereupon he exclaims againſt the ſtupid Atheiſts, who will not believe that a dead Body can revive again: *O Fool, that which thou ſoweſt is not quickened, except it die*, 1 Cor. xv.

Sixthly, I find more wonderful what is ſaid of certain Herbs, which riſe again out of their Aſhes; for Example, if you burn *Mugwort*, in *Lat. Artemiſia*, to Aſhes, and caſt the Aſhes upon the Earth, you ſhall ſee the ſame Herb grow again. Many have tried and found this by Experience: The ſame is reported of a Kind of Palm-tree; and becauſe, in the *Greek*, Φοῖνιξ, a

Palm,

Palm, is called *Phœnix*, this Experiment hath given Occaſion to the Fable of the *Phœnix*, a Bird that is ſaid to revive again out of its own Marrow and Aſhes. Who will offer to deny, that this is an excellent Expreſſion of the Reſurrection of our Bodies?

Seventhly, There are alſo ſeveral Sorts of Inſects, that repreſent to us Death and the Reſurrection: As the Silk-worms; for when theſe ſmall Creatures have finiſhed their Work, and ſpun out that Silk with which the Garments and ſtately Attire of Kings and Princes are made, they bury themſelves in a Tomb which they build; afterwards they become like a little Bean, which hides under its thin Skin the Formation of a white Butterfly. The ſame is obſerved of the Caterpillars; for, when they ſeem to be ſtark-dead, they creep out of their little Sepulchres in the Form of Butterflies of ſo many rare and various Colours, that they deſerve admiration; ſo that many curious Perſons keep them in their Cloſets amongſt their Rarities.

Eighthly, Amongſt the Beaſts alſo, ſome ſeem to be dead for ſeveral Months of the Year, being without Senſe or Motion; but afterwards they awake again, or rather they begin a new Life to move about as they did before.

Ninthly, But we need go no farther than ourſelves to find the Image of Death, and of the Reſurrection. For is there any Thing that can expreſs Death more perfectly than our dead Sleep, that ſtupifies the Senſes, puts a Stop to the Spirits of our Bodies, and binds up our moſt active Faculties? So that we have then Eyes without ſeeing, Ears without hearing, a Noſe and cannot ſmell, and a living Body, but we have no Feeling. But as ſoon as ſuch a Perſon comes to awaken again, to open his Eyes, and to ſtir and act, he repreſents a moſt perfect Image of the Reſurrection.

I might alſo add, amongſt the Images of Death and the Reſurrection, the ſeveral Changes and Alterations that happen to the *States* and *Empires* of the World. For oft-times they appear as dead and buried; but afterwards

terwards they riſe again from their Falls, and march out of their Obſcurity, as in a glorious Reſurrection. But I ſhall wave theſe Similitudes, and conſider only ſuch as the *Church* of God, in ſeveral Ages, hathrecommended to us as Types of the future Reſurrection of our Bodies.

Firſt, *Noah* and his Family (in which all the Church of God at that Time was comprehended) remained in the Ark as in a floating Coffin, during the Space of one hundred and fifty Days. But, after the Deluge, God cauſeth them to march out of that Ark. In the ſame Manner, after our Bodies ſhall have been in the Graves ſo many Years or Ages (as God has appointed in his wonderful Wiſdom; he will draw them out again by his infinite Power, and will ſay to us all, *Come forth, and appear to Judgement.*

Secondly, The People of *Iſrael* went down into *Egypt*, and dwelt there 200 Years or thereabouts, as in a Kind of Sepulchre; but God delivered them at laſt, and cauſed them to go up to the land of *Canaan*, as by a bleſſed Reſurrection.

Thirdly, The *Red-Sea*, into which this People went down, and in which *Pharaoh* with all his Hoſt was drowned, is an Image of our Grave; and the great Power of God diſcovered to make this People paſs through that dreadful Sea, and to go up out of its Depth, as by a Miracle, ſhews to the blindeſt Underſtandings, that Omnipotence which God will one Day manifeſt in drawing his People out of the Depths of Death, that we may be able to ſing the Song of *Moſes* and of the *Lamb*.

Fourthly, When the Ark of *God's Covenant* was taken Captive by the *Philiſtines*, and ſhut up in the Houſe of *Dagon*, it was a Type of thoſe Bodies which God hath choſen for his *Ark*, and which are to remain for a Time in *Satan's* Priſon under the Command of Death.

But when the *Philiſtines* ſent back again this Ark, and that the Children of *Iſrael* received it with outward Expreſſions of great Joy, it is a plain Deſcription of

of that which ſhall happen, when God ſhall oblige Death to open all its Priſons, and releaſe all its Priſoners: A Deſcription, I ſay, of the wonderful Joy of the Inhabitants of the *celeſtial Canaan*.

Fifthly, *Babylon* alſo, where the *Church of Iſrael* remained Captive Threeſcore and Ten Years, is a ſymbolical Repreſentation of the Grave, where theſe miſerable bodies are to continue in Captivity. Therefore in Alluſion, the Prophet ſtyles it *a Lake without Water*; but the Deliverance of *Iſrael* from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, is a Type of our *glorious Reſurrection*. For that Reaſon the Holy Man of God ſpeaks of it in ſuch Terms as have Reſpect to the Reſurrection of our Bodies from the Grave.

Sixthly, *Solomon's Temple*, that was demoliſhed and pulled down by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and that lay many Years in a deſolate Condition, is another Type of the Bodies of Believers deſtroyed by the Devil, and remaining for a Time in the Duſt. But when the *Jews* were returned from *Babylon*, they reared up the Walls of this Temple, and built it again. This repreſents the Reſurrection of our Bodies, the Temple of our Living God. Our Saviour had an Eye to this Alluſion, when he told the *Jews*, *Deſtroy this Temple, and I will build it up again in three Days:* For his beloved Diſciple adds immediately after, that he ſpoke of the Temple of his Body.

Seventhly, You may find the Types and Images of the ſame Thing in many of the Faithful, in *Joſeph*, *Daniel*, and *Jonas*. For as the Priſons of *Egypt*, the *Lion's Den*, and the *Whale's Belly*, repreſent the Graves; likewiſe, when *Darius* cauſed *Daniel* to be taken out of the Den, and when God ordered the Whale to caſt up *Jonas* upon the dry Ground, the Reſurrection is thereby deſcribed.

Eighthly, But there is no Paſſage, Type, nor Figure, more plain in the *Old Teſtament*, concerning the Reſurrection, than that of the xxxviiith of *Ezekiel*.

For

For that the Children of *Iſrael* might underſtand the Greatneſs of God's Power, able to free them from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, he cauſed the Reſurrection of the Dead to appear before his Prophet. He carried him away into a large Field, covered all over with dead and dry Bones. At God's Command theſe Bones drew near to one another, and began to be joined; afterwards the Sinews appeared, the Fleſh covered them, and the Skin was ſtretched over them; then a Breath came from the four Winds upon theſe dead Bodies, entered into them, and they roſe up alive upon their Feet, ſo that they ſeemed as a great Army.

But God hath not only repreſented the Reſurrection by many illuſtrious and excellent Types, but he hath alſo expreſsly foretold it by the holy Prophets: *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of this Myſtery in an excellent Manner, *Thy dead Men ſhall live together, with my dead Body ſhall they riſe; awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the Duſt; for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth ſhall caſt out the Dead*, Iſa. xxvi. And there can be nothing plainer than the Prophecy of the Prophet *Daniel*, *And many of them that ſleep in the Duſt of the Earth ſhall awake, ſome to everlaſting Life, and ſome to Shame, and everlaſting Contempt*, Dan. xii.

Therefore, in Hopes of the Reſurrection, the Patriarchs were very careful of their Tombs. *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, had no Inheritance in the Land of *Canaan*, and yet he was very deſirous to buy for himſelf and Family a Burying-Place. When *Jacob* lay upon his Death-Bed, he commanded his Son *Joſeph*, *Deal kindly and truely with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in* Egypt; *but I will lie with my Fathers, and thou ſhalt carry me out of* Egypt, *and bury me in their Burying-Place*, Gen. xlvii. And when *Joſeph* was ready to yield up his Soul unto God, he told his Brethren, *That God would ſurely viſit them; and that they ſhould carry his Bones from thence*, Gen. l.

All the Faithful of the *Old Teſtament* have publickly declared their Expectation of this bleſſed Reſurrection

from the Dead; as it may appear by that notable Paſſage of *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God; whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another's*, Job xix. As may alſo appear by the magnificent Words of *David*, *I will behold thy Face in Righteouſneſs, I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake, with thy Likeneſs*, Pſal. xvii.

Thoſe bleſſed Martyrs, mentioned in the Book of *Maccabees*, were ſo well perſuaded of this Doctrine, that they had the Courage willingly to offer their Bodies to Death and Torments the moſt dreadful. You may hear one ſpeaking boldly to King *Antiochus*, that moſt cruel Tyrant, who would have forced him to break the Law of God, *Thou Murderer, thou depriveſt us of Life; but the King of the World ſhall raiſe us up at the Reſurrection to an eternal Life, ſince we die for his Laws.* Another, animated with an holy Zeal, and an heroick Spirit, delivers his Tongue and Hands to be cut off, with this Saying, *I have received theſe Things from Heaven; but I now deſpiſe them for the Laws of my God; for I hope he will reſtore them to me again.* A third, ſlighting the Tyrant's Threats and Promiſes, uttered this excellent Saying; *It is better for me to leave the Expectations of Men to look for what God promiſes, that I may again riſe by his Power.* But nothing appears more admirable than the Mother of thoſe illuſtrious Children, when ſpeaking to the Seventh, the youngeſt of all, ſhe uſes this Language; *I know not how you were formed in my Womb; for I never gave you a Spirit, nor Life, nor gathered together your Limbs into a Body; but the Creator of the World, the Author of Nature, who by his Power and Goodneſs has formed the Beginning of all Things, he will of his Mercy reſtore to you again your Spirit and Life, becauſe you now value not yourſelves for the Sake of his Laws.*

Martha, the Siſter of *Lazarus*, was well acquainted with this Myſtery, as is to be proved by what ſhe told

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our Saviour Chriſt, *I know that my Brother ſhall riſe again at the Reſurrection at the laſt Day.* And the *Phariſees* maintained the Belief of the Reſurrection from the Dead againſt the *Sadducees*, who denied the Reſurrection and Immortality of the Soul. Therefore when St. *Paul* was to anſwer for himſelf before the *Jews* Tribunal, where Half were *Phariſees*, and Half were *Sadducees*, he made this Profeſſion, *I am a* Phariſee, *and the Son of a* Phariſee; *for the Hope of the Reſurrection of the Dead I am called in Queſtion:* And when he made his Apology before *Felix* the Governor, he ſpoke in this Manner: *This I confeſs unto thee, that, after the Way which they call Hereſy, I worſhip the God of my Fathers, believing all Things which are written in the Law and the Prophets; and have Hope towards God, which they themſelves alſo allow, that there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the Dead, both of the Juſt and of the Unjuſt.*

As the *Jews* of our Time have forſaken God, God hath alſo forſaken and given them over to a reprobate Senſe; for as they ſet aſide the infinite Merits of the *Death and Paſſion of Jeſus Chriſt*, they vainly perſuade themſelves, that their Sins are ſufficiently expiated by their own Deaths; notwithſtanding the grievous Corruptions that are to be found in their Doctrines, that depart out of this Life, in Hopes of riſing again one Day. For that Reaſon they are careful in waſhing their dead Bodies, in burying them with Honour and Decency: And when they have thus laid them in their Graves, they bow themſelves three Times towards the Earth, and caſt behind them Graſs newly plucked up from the Ground. By which Ceremony they would have us underſtand, that Corpſe which they lay in the Earth, ſhall one Day riſe again, and puſh forth, according to the Prophet's Expreſſion, *Your Bones ſhall grow as the Graſs.*

But this Article of the Reſurrection of our Bodies, which is found in ſome few Paſſages of the *Old Teſtament*, is to be ſeen almoſt in every Page of the *New*; and the Texts concerning this Truth are ſo plain and

expreſs, that it is not poſſible to reject this wholeſome Doctrine, but we muſt at the ſame Time abjure the Chriſtian Religion, and give the Lye to the Holy Ghoſt.

That our Faith might be the better ſettled, God has been pleaſed not only to publiſh the Reſurrection from the Dead by his Prophets and Apoſtles; he hath not only diſcovered to us many excellent and delightful Types and Figures of this Truth; but, to give us a more experimental Teſtimony of his Power, he hath raiſed ſeveral from the Dead. In the *Old Teſtament*, God raiſed up two Children, one at the Prayers of the Prophet *Elijah*, the other at the Requeſt of *Eliſha*, his Succeſſor, 1 *Kings* xvii. And when the dead Body had been laid in *Eliſha's* Grave, and touched his Bones, it returned to Life again, 2 *Kings* xiii. And, during our Saviour's Abode on Earth, he raiſed to Life the Daughter of *Jairus* that was dead; the Widow's Son of *Nain*, who was carried out of the Gate to be buried; and *Lazarus*, who had been four Days lying in his Grave; whoſe Body began to ſtink, *Matt.* ix. *Luke* vii. When this merciful Saviour gave up the Ghoſt upon the Croſs, *The Graves were opened, and many Bodies of Saints which ſlept, aroſe, and came out of the Graves, after his Reſurrection; and went into the holy City, and appeared unto many*, Matt. xxvii. After his Aſcenſion he raiſed from the Dead, *Dorcas*, a charitable Widow, at the Prayers of St. *Peter*, to comfort the poor Widows that wept for her; and a young Man, named *Eutychus*, was reſtored to Life by the Means of St. *Paul*, that the Congregation of Believers might be comforted, who were troubled at his unexpected Fall and ſudden Death.

But chiefly we have the Example of our Lord, who hath raiſed himſelf up by a Divine Power. This glorious Inſtance is able not only to excite our Admiration, but alſo to ſettle our Faith, and nouriſh our Hopes: For the Reſurrection of other Perſons ſhows what God can do, but the Reſurrection of Chriſt declares to us what God will do, and is an Earneſt to aſſure us of our future Reſurrection. It is not poſſible to believe,

as

as we ought, that Jeſus Chriſt is riſen from the Dead, but we muſt alſo, by a neceſſary Conſequence, believe that he will raiſe us likewiſe. This St. *Paul* endeavours to teach us, *If we believe that Jeſus Chriſt is dead and riſen; even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him,* 1 Theſſ. iv. As the Head is, ſo ſhall the Members be. As the Firſt-fruits are, ſo ſhall the reſt of the Harveſt be. The ſame Apoſtle labours to perſuade this Truth in theſe excellent Words, *Chriſt is riſen from the Dead, and become the Firſt-fruits of them that ſlept; for ſince by Man came Death, by Man came alſo the Reſurrection of the Dead; for as in* Adam *all die, ſo in* Chriſt *ſhall all be made alive: But every Man in his own Order,* Chriſt *the Firſt-fruits, afterwards they that are* Chriſt's *at his coming.*

Againſt this holy and divine Doctrine, ſome object, That there are Bodies conſumed by Fire, and burnt to Aſhes. But what follows from hence? For, whether the Bodies be reduced to Duſt or Aſhes, it matters not; God is able to reſtore them, and render to them their primitive Forms. Since certain Herbs (conſumed to Aſhes) riſe again out of the Ground by a natural Inclination, as we have already obſerved; and ſince Art is ſo induſtrious to make them tranſparent Bodies (of an extraordinary Beauty) of melted Aſhes; ſhall not God, who is ſo infinitely above all Abilities of Nature created by him, and of all Arts and Sciences which proceed from his Direction, be able of Aſhes to compoſe a beautiful and perfect Body?

Others pretend next, that a great many Bodies have been drowned in the Seas, and ſwallowed up in the Waters. I acknowledge that to be true: But I affirm, that God is altogether as able to draw a Body out of the Depth of the Sea, as out of the Bowels of the Earth. He who hath preſcribed Bounds to this great Sea, who drives up its vaſt Concavities, and lays open its immenſe Bottom, hath not he a Command over this Sea? Cannot he oblige it to reſtore thoſe Bodies that have been committed to its keeping, as when he com-

manded the Whale to bring again to Land the Prophet *Jonas*, whom it had ſwallowed up alive?

Some object, that there are Bodies devoured by the Beaſts, which have been their Food, and have been turned into their Subſtance. But this Objection is not to be valued; for when a human Body ſhall have paſſed through the Bowels of the Beaſts, and been changed a thouſand and a thouſand Times into their Subſtance, there is nothing that can hinder God from reſtoring them again at the Day of the Reſurrection. For thoſe Animals ſhall never riſe again; 'tis therefore nothing to the Purpoſe to enquire after them, when the Body ſhall re-aſſume that which they ſhall have devoured, and turned into their own Subſtance. The ſtrongeſt and moſt plauſible Objection concerns the *Anthropophagi, the Eaters of Men.* For 'tis very well known, that in the *Indies* there are ſome Savages ſo barbarous as to feed upon human Fleſh, and to eſteem it as their greateſt Dainties. Some anſwer to this, That ſuch Kind of Inhumanities are not ordinary, and that ſuch wretched *Indians* never practiſe ſuch heinous Things but in urgent Neceſſity, or when they purpoſe to revenge themſelves upon their Enemies. But ſuch as have given an Account of the *New-found America*, relate, That in ſome Provinces there have been ſuch cruel and inhuman Savages, as not only devour the Fleſh of their Enemies, whom they ſacrificed to their Idols, but alſo of their deareſt Friends, whom they cut in Pieces in their Shambles. The ſame Hiſtorians tell us, That ſome of the barbarous People are ſo impiouſly miſtaken, as to reckon it an Act of Piety and Duty to their Parents and Friends, to give them a Sepulchre in their own Stomachs. Again, they ſay, that there are ſome, who, like ſo many mad Dogs, feed upon Infants, and hunt after Men, as we do after wild Beaſts in the Field. In Caſe all theſe Relations ſhould be true, I muſt deſire my Reader to take Notice, there are two Kinds of Parts that compoſe the human Body, the one ſolid, as the Bones and Nerves, and ſo eſſential

eſſential to it, that without them it would ceaſe from being any longer an human Body; the other Parts are adventitious, accidental, and changeable; they ſerve to maintain it almoſt as the Food and Nouriſhment. Now this I affirm, as an undoubted Truth, that when it happens that Men feed upon their own Kind, God takes Care, by his wonderful Providence, that the eſſential and ſolid Parts of the Man devoured, never enter into the Subſtance or Compoſition of the ſolid Parts of the Devourer. At the great Day of the Reſurrection, the Bodies will re-aſſume all their eſſential and ſolid Parts, without which they cannot be true Bodies; but they ſhall not need the accidental and fluid Parts, as are the Humours and Blood; for then they ſhall have no more inward Heat to conſume them, and no more Hunger and Thirſt. Therefore they ſhall never have any Need of Meat or of Drink, or of any other Things whatſoever, to ſerve them inſtead of Nouriſhment. Let the Metals be never ſo much mingled, the Goldſmith ſeparates them with Eaſe. Thus let our human Bodies be never ſo much altered and ſhuffled together, God will be able enough to ſeparate and diſtinguiſh the one from another. When the Goldſmith will ſeparate the Metals, he caſts them into the Melting-pot, and cauſeth them to paſs through the Fire; but God, who can do all Things without Means, hath no Need of the Fire, or the Melting-pot; for by his Word, at the Twinkling of an Eye, he can cauſe this Separation to be made; and render to every Body that which neceſſarily belongs to its Compoſition. In a Word, if the Difficulty ſhould be far greater than it is, and if the Reſolution of this Objection were not ſo eaſy to be made, it ſhould not leſſen our Faith, or cauſe us to doubt of the Reſurrection of our Bodies.

When it concerns Things that the Holy Scripture doth not expreſsly declare and decide, or that cannot be drawn from it by neceſſary Conſequence, it is lawful to diſpute either for or againſt ſuch Things; but if it

concerns ſuch as this ſacred Writ, inſpired of God, plainly ſet forth, our Faith muſt learn her Duty, to ſubmit to Almighty God, and believe that there is nothing impoſſible with him. Now this Doctrine of the Reſurrection of the Dead is ſo expreſsly and plainly found in this holy Scripture, that it ſeems as viſible as the Beams of the Noon Sun. Many Queſtions are made upon this Subject; ſome are of that Importance, that an Anſwer will give Satisfaction upon this excellent Subject. Firſt, They enquire by whom, and by whoſe Power, ſhall the Reſurrection be effected? The Scripture gives an Occaſion to make this Enquiry? for it aſcribes it ſometimes to the Father, as in *John* v. *The Father raiſes the Dead, and quickens them*; ſometimes to the Son, as in *Phil.* iii. *Jeſus Chriſt ſhall change our vile Bodies according to his mighty Working, whereby he is able to ſubdue all Things unto himſelf*; and ſometimes to the Holy Ghoſt, as in *Rom.* viii. *If the Spirit of him who raiſed Jeſus from the Dead, dwell in you; he that hath raiſed up Chriſt from the Dead ſhall alſo quicken your mortal Bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* This Difficulty may be thus reſolved; all the outward Works of God, that concern the Creatures, are common to the Three Perſons of the moſt holy, moſt glorious, and moſt wonderful TRINITY.

So that we ſhall riſe again by the infinite Power of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt. Nevertheleſs, the Reſurrection is eſpecially aſcribed to the Son, as he is the Judge of the Quick and the Dead. In Order to the Diſcharge of that glorious Employment, all Power hath been committed to him in Heaven, and in the Earth, and in the Seas.

2. Some enquire farther, When ſhall this Reſurrection be? I anſwer, that it ſhall be in the Day in which God hath appointed to judge all the World, by the Man whom he hath ordained, *Acts* xvii. You are not to expect from me, *Chriſtians*, that I ſhould point out to you preciſely the Day when this ſhall come to paſs; for

for it belongs not to us to know the Times and the Seaſons, which God hath reſerved to himſelf. 'Tis true, we may ſee, that moſt Part of the Prophecies are already fulfilled; ſo that we may ſay in general Terms, *The Lord is at hand, and our Salvation is nearer than when we believed*, Phil. iv. Rom. xiii.

Nevertheleſs, I cannot undertake to mark out unto you this glorious Day, nor to tell you the Year nor Age when this ſhall be. There is no Man upon Earth, nor Angel in Heaven, that is able to ſpeak of it with Certainty. Therefore Jeſus Chriſt himſelf informs us, *But of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man, no, not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only*, Mat. xxiv. If our Saviour ſaith more, *That the Son himſelf knoweth not the Day*, Mark xiii. we muſt underſtand this as he is a Man, and during his Abode in the World; for, as he is God, he knoweth all Things from all Eternity. And now that he is glorified, as he is a Man, he underſtands all Things. But he hath hid from Men the Time of his Coming, that we might expect him at every Moment. As he tells the holy Apoſtles, *Watch therefore; for ye know not what Hour the Lord doth come; but know this, that if the good Man of the Houſe had known in what Watch the Thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have ſuffered his Houſe to be broken up*, Matt. xxv. He writes in the ſame Language to the Angel of the Church of *Sardis*; *Remember how thou haſt received and heard, and hold faſt and repent; if therefore thou ſhalt not watch, I will come to thee as a Thief, and thou ſhalt not know what Hour I will come upon thee.* The firſt Chriſtians were very well acquainted with this wholeſome Doctrine, as we may judge by this Paſſage of St. *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians: But of the Times and of the Seaſons, Brethren, you have no Need that I write unto you; for yourſelves know perfectly, that the Day of the Lord ſo cometh as a Thief in the Night. For when they ſhall ſay, Peace and Safety; then ſudden Deſtruction cometh upon them, as Travail upon a Woman with Child, and they ſhall not*

eſcape, 1 Theſſ. v. As the Days of *Noah* were, ſo ſhall be the Coming of the Son of Man. For as they were before the Deluge, eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in Marriage, and were not ſenſible of the Deluge, until it was come, and carried them all away; ſo ſhall it be at the Coming of the Son of Man, *Matt.* xxv.

The wiſe Man tells us, *That Hope delayed cauſeth the Heart to languiſh*, Prov. xiii. But we muſt except the Hope and Expectation of the Reſurrection; for though this bleſſed Reſurrection ſhould not come to paſs yet many thouſand Ages, it ſhould not cauſe ſuch as die in the Lord to languiſh. For while their Bodies are in their Graves, they ſuffer nothing; and as they are there without Senſe, they cannot be impatient, no more than a Man that is in a deep Sleep. For the Soul enjoys in the Contemplation of God's Face ſuch unſpeakable Satisfactions, that it is not capable of Grief, Sorrow, Diſpleaſure, or the leaſt Diſturbance. St. *Peter* tells us, *That a thouſand Years with God are but as a Day*, 2 Pet. iii. We may ſay the ſame of thoſe who were admitted to God's glorious Preſence to behold his Face; for a thouſand Years, in ſuch an happy State, appear leſs than one Day in this miſerable Condition. The Hundreds and Thouſands of Years paſs away far quicker to the bleſſed Inhabitants of Heaven, than the Moments to ſuch as live in Troubles upon Earth.

3. Others deſire to know where this Reſurrection ſhall happen. The *Jewiſh* Whimſies and Extravagancies have given Occaſion to this Queſtion; for they think, that the dead Bodies riſe in no other Place but the Holy Land. Therefore they have made another childiſh Fable, that the Bodies of all their Nation, that die in ſeveral Parts of the World, ſhall go through earthly Vaults, and roll through the ſecret Conveyances of this Globe, until they come to the Land of *Canaan*, where they are to ariſe from the Dead. And as one Error occaſions another, they ſay further, That they ſhall feel more or leſs Pain in their Paſſage, according to the Goodneſs or Sins of their Lives. I need

not

not ſpend any Time in the Refutation of this fooliſh and impertinent Opinion; but it may juſtly cauſe us to acknowledge the juſt Judgement of God upon this unhappy People, who have refuſed, with a deviliſh Obſtinacy, the great Saviour of the World. For, becauſe they have not received the Love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved, God hath ſent them ſtrong Deluſions, that they might believe a Lye, and hath given them over to a reprobate Senſe, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. For us Chriſtians, we ſay, That, without ſo much ado, where the Body is at the laſt Day, there it ſhall riſe from its Grave.

The next Queſtion is, What ſhall riſe from the Dead? I anſwer, That the ſame Body which falls by Death, ſhall riſe again at the general Reſurrection. If God ſhould make a new Body to join it to our Souls, it would be no more a Reſurrection, but rather a new Creation; neither ſhall we only take ſuch a Body as our own; for Things that are only alike, are not the ſame, let them be never ſo much alike; but we ſhall take again the ſame Body, which our Souls animate during its Abode here below; and if I may make uſe of the Expreſſions and Terms of Divines, it ſhall not only be the ſame Body, but alſo the ſame Individual. As in the firſt Reſurrection God creates not a new Soul, but he regenerates and ſanctifies that which was dead in its Treſpaſſes and Sins; thus in the ſecond Reſurrection, God makes not another Body, but he only beſtows another Life upon that which was lying in Corruption, and amongſt the Dead. As when our Saviour roſe from the Dead, he made not for himſelf a new Body, but he took again that ſame which had been formed in the Womb of the bleſſed Virgin; likewiſe, in the general Reſurrection, he will not create for us new Bodies, but he will reſtore to us that ſame which we had from our Mothers Wombs. This Argument is not to be anſwered; for the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt is not only the efficient or meritorious Cauſe of ours, but alſo the Pattern and Model, or, as the

the Schoolmen tell us, it is the exemplary Cauſe of our future Reſurrection. But there is no Need of Arguments, when the Word of God is ſo clear and expreſs on this Subject. *St. Paul* informs us, *That the Lord ſhall change our vile Body; that this Corruptible muſt put on Incorruption, this Mortal muſt put on Immortality*, Phil. iii. 1 Cor. xv. *And that the Life of Jeſus ſhall be made manifeſt in our mortal Fleſh*, 2 Cor. iv. And the holy *Job* ſaith, *Job* xix. not only, *that he ſhall ſee God, but that he ſhall ſee God in his Fleſh, and that he ſhall ſee him with his Eyes*: For the ſame Reaſon, in ſome ancient Copies, in our Apoſtles Creed, as in the Creed of *Aquila*, I find not only, *I believe the Reſurrection of the Fleſh, but I believe the Reſurrection of this Fleſh.*

5. Some aſk whether the Bodies of the Wicked ſhall riſe from the Dead, as well as the Bodies of the Righteous? The *Jews*, who delight in whimſical Inventions, fancy a Reſurrection only for the Juſt, in which Unbelievers and Reprobates have no Share. To ſtrengthen this Dream, they abuſe the Words of the firſt Pſalm, *The Wicked ſhall not ſtand in Judgement; nor Sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous. Finally*, They are ſo much beſotted with an high Conceit of themſelves; that none are righteous but of their own Nation; that none are pleaſing to God, or ought to riſe again from the Dead, but the *Iſraelites*. But we Chriſtians are brought up and inſtructed in better Doctrines; we believe, without Heſitation, that all Men that are dead ſince the Beginning of the World, of every People and Nation under Heaven, ſhall riſe again at the Day of Judgment. For St. *Paul* aſſures us, *That there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the Juſt, and of the Unjuſt. David*, in his firſt Pſalm, ſpeaks nothing againſt this Truth, which is as clear as the Sun, and as infallible as the Heavens and the Earth; for he ſaith not, the Wicked ſhall not riſe again, but only that they ſhall not ſtand before God in Judgment; that is to ſay, that they ſhall not ſubſiſt before the Tribunal of God's Juſtice, nor be able to abide the fiery Preſence

ſence of God, angry and diſpleaſed for their Impieties. But this we may obſerve, that although God will raiſe up all the Men of the World, without Exception, from their Graves, there ſhall be a notable Difference between them; for he will raiſe the Wicked up, and draw them out of their Graves, as a Judge drags an Offender out of his Dungeon, to ſentence him to Death. But he will raiſe again Believers as their Redeemer, that their Bodies, as well as their Souls, might enjoy the bleſſed Fruits of the Redemption purchaſed for us. Therefore this Divine Saviour ſtiles them *Children of the Reſurrection*; for none but they ſhall inherit his Bleſſings, and partake of his eternal Glory.

6. Some enquire further, In what Manner ſhall this Reſurrection be? I anſwer, That our Lord and Saviour ſhall come down from Heaven, clothed with Light and Glory, and attended upon by the Angels of his Power, and Millions of his Saints. He ſhall be preceded by the Cry of the Archangel, and the Trumpet of God, for the Trumpet ſhall ſound: And as at the ſounding of the Silver Trumpet that proclaimed the *Jews* Jubilee, all the Priſons were opened, and the Priſoners ſet at Liberty; in the ſame Manner, at the Sound of the laſt Trumpet, all the Priſons of Death ſhall be broke open, and the Bodies that were impriſoned ſhall go out; to ſpeak in the Language of the Holy Ghoſt, *The Sea ſhall give up her Dead; and Death and Hell ſhall reſtore the Dead that are in them.* And as *Lazarus* roſe up as ſoon as Jeſus Chriſt had called to him in his Tomb, *Lazarus, come out*; likewiſe when the Voice of this great God and Saviour ſhall ſound in our Tombs, at that Moment we ſhall riſe again, and appear before him. For the Hour cometh, that ſuch as are in the Graves ſhall hear the Voice of the Son of God; and they that hear, ſhall live.

7. The next Queſtion is, In what Stature of Body ſhall we riſe? Some are perſuaded that we ſhall riſe in the ſame Stature that we die. This they gather

from

from St. *John's* Description of the last Judgment, *I saw the Living and the Dead, the Great and the Small, standing before God.* Others think, that all the Elect shall rise again in perfect Stature, and shall be like to our Saviour Christ, which they endeavour to prove by St. *Paul's* Words, *We shall meet in a perfect Man, to the Measure of the perfect Stature of Christ.*

When it concerns Things that relate to our Salvation, it is a respectful Ignorance to refuse to pry into those Things which God hath concealed, or not thought proper to reveal. Therefore, as the holy Writ is silent concerning this, we cannot speak of it with too much Sobriety. I dare not affirm, that we shall rise again in the same Stature; I confess, that this Opinion, That all the Saints shall have a Stature like to our Saviour Christ, and that they shall bear the Image and Likeness in that Respect in their Bodies, contains nothing contrary to Piety. But I dare say, that this cannot be proved by the Words of St. *Paul*; for the Sequel of his Discourse shews most evidently, that he intends not the Stature of the Body, but that of the Soul, which consists in Knowledge and Holiness.

That Opinion which appears to be most likely, and most conformable to the Analogy of Faith, is, that the Elect shall rise again in perfect Stature. For the Beauty and Perfection of the Stature contributes much to the Glory and Majesty of the Body, without which Man cannot be said to be most perfectly happy. Besides, this Perfection is agreeable to that Command and Dominion, which God shall give to the Saints, over the Creatures, after the Resurrection. If those who die in their Childhood rise again in the same Stature; if those who depart in their old and decrepit Age, come out of their Graves with their feeble and infirm Bodies, how could either of them be fit for that Glory and Perfection where nothing shall be amiss or wanting? As the *promised Land* was the Type of the celestial *Canaan*, it is not without good Cause that the Scripture takes Notice, that there was none of those that

that went over *Jordan* into the Holy Land that was old and decrepit, unleſs it were *Joſhua* and *Caleb*; none of the reſt were threeſcore Years old. I may alſo apply to the *Jeruſalem* above, that which the Prophet ſaith of the *Jeruſalem* here below, the Type and Figure of the celeſtial: *From henceforth there ſhall not be any Child of a few Days old, nor any ancient Perſon who fulfilleth not his Days.*

Finally, As God created *Adam* and *Eve* in a perfect Stature, to ſettle them in the terreſtrial Paradiſe, it is my Opinion, that he will alſo raiſe up all the Faithful in a perfect Stature, to introduce them into the celeſtial Paradiſe. In this Life the Body of a Child is many Years before it can attain to the Stature of a perfect Man; but at the great Day of the Reſurrection, God will grant it to him in a Moment.

That which is ſpoken of in *Rev.* xx. is not contrary to this Doctrine; for when the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, That *the Dead, Small and Great, ſhall ſtand before God*; that relates not to the Stature, or Bigneſs of Body, but to the State and Condition of the Perſon; that is to ſay, the Kings and Princes ſhall appear to Judgement, as well as the vileſt and moſt contemptible Subjects, and the moſt wretched Slaves: Therefore theſe former Words are deſigned to expreſs nothing more than what St. *Paul* ſaith, *That we muſt all appear before the Judgement-Seat of Chriſt, that we might receive in our Bodies according as we have done, whether it be Good or Evil.*

Some are ready to aſk, What Manner of Bodies ſhall the Reprobates have after the Reſurrection? I have no Mind to ſpeak any Thing of myſelf; otherwiſe I ſhould anſwer, That in Conſideration of the Fury of Hell-Fire, the Smoke of the bottomleſs Pit, and the Violence of the exceſſive Torments which they ſhall ſuffer, they ſhall appear moſt deformed, ugly, ill-favoured, and dreadful to look upon. I ſhould ſay, that there ſhall appear in their guilty Looks and frighted Countenances, the Devil's Image, and that of the helliſh Furies.

ries. But it will be ſufficient to reply, That the Bodies of the Wicked ſhall be immortal, and that their Immortality ſhall be moſt miſerable; that it had been far better for them to have never been, or to have been as the Beaſts, that die without any Hope of living again; for they ſhall live to die eternally, and they ſhall die, but never conſume away. It ſhall not be poſſible to add any Thing to their moſt violent Tortures, for they ſhall be inexpreſſible; nor to the Continuance of their Sufferings, for they ſhall be eternal. Therefore, as we have already taken Notice, they ſhall ſeek Death, that is, they ſhall deſire to be reduced to nothing; but Death ſhall fly away from them, and give them over to a Worm that ſhall never die, and to a Fire that ſhall never be quenched. O miſerable Bodies! O wretched Souls! whom God ſhall caſt into the Midſt of Hell's fierceſt Flames, and againſt whom the Devils ſhall let fly all their Arrows, diſcharge all their Fury, and kindle all their Fires, and whom they will take Pleaſure to torment for ever and ever.

9. Some enquire what Manner of Bodies the Children of God, and the Members of Chriſt, ſhall have, after they are riſen from the Dead? I anſwer, That their Subſtance ſhall be the ſame which they had before Death; they ſhall not be imaginary or falſe Appearances, but true human Bodies, made up of Fleſh and Bones; for we may ſay of all the Bodies of the Faithful, as that of our Saviour Chriſt, that the Reſurrection will procure to them a conſiderable Glory which they never had before, but it ſhall not deſtroy their Nature and Manhood. They ſhall be able to ſpeak in the Language of our Redeemer, *Feel and ſee; a Spirit hath neither Fleſh nor Bones, as ye ſee that I have.* As our Soul ſhall loſe nothing of its Being, only it ſhall be perfectly cleanſed from all Sin and Corruption, and ſanctified in ſuch a Manner, that it will not be poſſible for it to entertain any vicious Inclination; likewiſe there ſhall be no Alteration in the eſſential Parts of our Bodies; but there ſhall be a wonderful Change

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in regard of the Qualities; for they ſhall caſt off all Corruption and Mortality, and ſhall never be ſubject to Sickneſs, Pain, nor to the Inconveniencies that diſturb it during this Life. And, if they have now any Imperfection, they ſhall be perfectly freed; ſo that we may juſtly ſay of the celeſtial *Jeruſalem*, that in it no Blind nor Lame ſhall be ſuffered to enter; for all the Bodies of the Saints ſhall be perfect and beautiful, that the leaſt Spot or Blemiſh ſhall not be ſeen in them, 1 *Sam.* vi.

I know that Jeſus Chriſt tells us in his Goſpel, *Mat.* v. *If thy Right Eye offend thee, pull it out, and caſt it from thee; for it is better that one of thy Members periſh, than that thy whole Body ſhould be caſt into Hell; and if thy Hand or thy Foot offend thee, cut it off, and caſt it from thee; for it is better that thou ſhouldſt enter into Life lame or maimed, than to have two Feet and two Hands, and to be caſt into Hell-fire*, Mark iv. But theſe Words are figurative; by them our Saviour would teach us, that for his Sake and Glory we muſt deny our deareſt Affections, and our moſt importunate Luſts. And if theſe Words ſhould be taken in their literal Senſe, we muſt underſtand a Suppoſition, if it were poſſible to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven with one Eye, lame, or maimed, it would be far better to be admitted to that bleſſed State, than to have a perfect and a whole Body, and to be caſt into the Torments of Hell. From thence we cannot infer, that the Faithful are to riſe from their Graves with imperfect and deficient Bodies; for that is repugnant to an accompliſhed Happineſs: Since Sin ſhall be utterly aboliſhed and deſtroyed, the Puniſhment of Sin ſhall continue no longer.

There are, nevertheleſs, ſome who believe, with ſeveral ancient Doctors of the primitive Church, that the holy Martyrs ſhall bear about them the Scars and other Marks of their Sufferings for the Name of Jeſus, in the ſame Manner as their glorious Saviour, after his Reſurrection, could ſhew the Print of the Nails that had faſtened his Feet and Hands to the

Croſs, and in his Side the Hole that the Spear had made. They eſteemed ſuch Marks glorious and honourable Scars; ſo that, according to their Judgement, the Martyrs ſhall be like to the generous and noble hearted Soldiers, who have received Wounds in the Service of their Prince, which they bear about as undoubted Expreſſions of their Courage. I ſhall not altogether contradict this Opinion; for it is not contrary to the Analogy of Faith: But I dare not affirm it as a certain Truth; for we cannot learn this from the holy Scriptures, that repreſent theſe bleſſed Martyrs, clothed with long Robes, waſhed and whitened in the Blood of the Lamb, without making any Mention of their former Sufferings. Our Saviour was pleaſed to preſerve the Marks of his Sufferings, that he might convince St. *Thomas* of his Unbelief, and that he may one Day diſcover and ſhew them to thoſe that have pierced him through: But, from this Inſtance, I cannot ſee how we can conclude any Thing to the Purpoſe. We may ſafely ſay, either that the Martyrs ſhall have no ſuch Scars, or, if they have, they ſhall bring no Deformity to their Bodies, nor ſhall they deprive us of any Member, or Part required in us, to make us perfect. If it ſhould be otherwiſe, we could not be entirely and perfectly happy. After the Reſurrection, the Bodies of God's Children ſhall have none of theſe Imperfections that Sin hath brought into the World. They ſhall not feel any of the Infirmities, unto which the Bodies of *Adam* and *Eve* were ſubject in the State of Innocence; for their Life was ſenſual and Animal-like, diſturbed with Hunger, Thirſt, and Wearineſs; there they had Need of Nouriſhment and Drink, and eſpecially of the Fruits of the Tree of Life, to ſupply ſo much of their natural Heat. I conceive alſo, that they ſtood in Want of Reſt and Sleep; and although God would have protected them from all dangerous Accidents, if they had continued in their Integrity; if we conſider them in themſelves, without any ſuch

Protection, they might have been injured by Fire and Sword, and burnt with the scorching Sun. But it shall be otherwise with the Bodies of the Righteous, after the Resurrection; they shall not be subject to any Infirmity; they shall be free from Pain, Weariness, and from the Sense of Violence, as the Holy Spirit promiseth; they shall hunger and thirst no more, the Sun shall not burn them, nor any Heat incommode them. It is not to be doubted, but that a glorified Body shall enjoy all the Perfection that a human Body is capable of, and that the greatest and rarest Beauties on Earth are but deformed Objects, in Comparison of the celestial, which shall never change nor fade away, no Accident shall ever be able to destroy or diminish them. Years, Ages, and Thousands of Ages, shall not imprint upon our glorious Faces the least Wrinkle; we shall be always young and lusty, as a precious Stone that preserves its Lustre and Beauty without Alteration, and as the Sun that never decreaseth in Light and Heat. Those glorified Bodies shall cast off all gross and heavy Qualities that incline them to Earth, so that they shall be more nimble than the Eagles, and shall be able to fly up as quick as the Fire. St. *Paul* intends to teach us this Truth, when he tells us, that this Body is sown an earthly and sensual Body; but it shall rise again an heavenly and a spiritual Body. We are not so to understand these Words, as to think that God will change them into Spirits, or into such uncompounded Bodies as are the Heavens; for they shall yet be made up of Flesh and Bones, and they shall have all the essential Parts of an human Body, as we have already taken Notice: But I conceive, that they are named spiritual and heavenly, because they shall have no more the gross and earthly Qualities, and they shall live no more a sensitive and an animal Life. In a Word, they shall need no more Meat nor Drink, than the Stars and celestial Bodies, no more than the holy Angels of God.

I confeſs that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt aſcended up into Heaven in a Cloud; not becauſe a Cloud was neceſſary to ſupport and keep up his glorious Body: For if in the State of his Infirmity and Humiliation, this divine Body was able to walk upon the Waves of the Sea without ſinking, by the Aſſiſtance of his divine Nature; how much more, ſince his Glorification, ſhall it be able to aſcend up on high, and to go whither he liſteth! If the Help of any Creature had been neceſſary to ſupport him, he might have had Legions of immortal Angels to carry him up; but Chriſt needed not to be aſſiſted, neither by a Body, nor a Spirit, nor by any other Creature. This Cloud, therefore, that appeared at his Aſcenſion, was no Token of the Infirmity of his human Nature; it rather manifeſted the Glory and Magnificence of his divine Majeſty, unto which this precious Body was united perſonally. God hath often revealed himſelf, attended by a Cloud, as upon Mount *Sinai*, in the Ark of the Covenant, at the Dedication of *Solomon's* Temple. Therefore, that Cloud in which God was pleaſed to diſcover himſelf, is ſtiled, *The Glory of God*, that is, the Sign and viſible Expreſſion of his glorious Preſence, and divine Majeſty. Let us therefore conclude from hence, that the Cloud which attended upon the glorified Body of Jeſus Chriſt, was no Aſſiſtance to carry him up to Heaven, but as it were a Chariot of Triumph, to cauſe him to aſcend with more Glory and Pomp. The Bodies of the Saints, after the Reſurrection, ſhall ſhine, and be full of Glory; they ſhall not only have ſome ſuperficial Splendour upon their Countenance or Skin, as *Moſes*, when he had been with God forty Days and forty Nights, in the holy Mountain; but they ſhine, within and without, as a true Diamond, that caſts abroad on all Sides its Light and Flames: So that it ſhall happen to them, as it happened to our Saviour upon Mount *Tabor*; for it is ſaid, that his Garments became white as the Light. In the ſame Manner, at the Time of our Transfiguration, our Bodies, that

are

are but Garments of our immortal Souls, ſhall be as clear as the Light, and as bright as the celeſtial Globes. I ſpeak here nothing but what the Prophet *Daniel* ſaid before me, *Dan.* xii. *They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.* And our Saviour aſſures us, *Matt.* xxiii. *The Children of God ſhall ſhine in the Kingdom of their Father, as the Sun.*

Theſe glorified Bodies ſhall never corrupt nor putrefy, but they ſhall be for ever incorruptible. Therefore St. *Paul* aſſures us, *that this Corruptible muſt put on Incorruption.* So that I may ſafely affirm, that their Glory ſhall be more durable than that of the Sun, or of the Moon, or of the Stars. For though theſe celeſtial Bodies never corrupt, out of any inward Principle; though there can no Alteration happen to them, neither from their eſſential Form, nor from the Properties that iſſue from it, nor from any other inherent Quality, they ſhall nevertheleſs corrupt, out of an external Principle; for the Almighty Hand of God, which made them, ſhall change and alter them, as the royal Prophet tells us, in *Pſalm* cii. *The Heavens ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a Garment; as a Veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed,* 2 Pet. iii. *The Heavens*, ſaith he, *ſhall paſs away with a great Noiſe.* Whereas the glorified Bodies ſhall never corrupt, neither by any internal Principles, nor by their eſſential Form, nor by the Properties and Accidents that flow from it, nor by any external Cauſe, or by any Accident whatſoever, that can be imagined; for the Almighty Hand of God ſhall make them, never to marr them again. From thence it follows, that they ſhall die no more, but ſhall continue immortal; for with Incorruption they muſt put on Immortality. Therefore, when our Saviour ſpeaks of the State of the glorified Saints, *Luke* xx. he ſaith not only, *that they ſhall not die; but they cannot die any more, becauſe they ſhall be like the Angels, being the Children of the Reſurrection.* In this conſiſts the

Difference between them and thoſe whom God hath raiſed up, already mentioned in the *Old* and *New Teſtament*. For they were forced to return to their ſenſual Life, to eat and drink, and therefore they were again ſubject to Corruption and Death. But at the Day of the general Reſurrection, *whatſoever is mortal ſhall be ſwallowed up by Life*; therefore St. *Paul* applies to this glorious Day the Accompliſhment of this Prophecy, *Death is ſwallowed up in Victory*. And he brings in theſe Perſons who ſhall be clothed with this immortal Glory, braving Death and the Grave, in this triumphing Language, *O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory!*

In ſhort, to make us ſenſible that our Bodies ſhall put on the richeſt and moſt noble Qualities that can be imagined, and to expreſs all in a Word, the Holy Ghoſt aſſures us, that they ſhall bear the Image of the Son of God, and be made conformable to his glorious Body. St. *Paul* declares this Truth, 1 *Cor.* xv. *The firſt Man*, ſaith he, *was of the Earth, earthy*; *the ſecond Man was the Lord from Heaven*; *as is the Earthy, ſuch are they that are earthy*; *and as is the Heavenly, ſuch are they alſo that are heavenly*; *and as we have borne the Image of the Earthy, we ſhall alſo bear the Image of the Heavenly*. And in *Phil.* iii. he ſaith, *We wait for the Lord Jeſus from Heaven, who ſhall change our vile Body, that it may be like to his glorious Body*. From hence you may underſtand, Chriſtians, that at the rebuilding of this little Temple of the Godhead, there ſhall happen no ſuch Things, as at the rearing up of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*; for when that was rebuilding, at the Return from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, they who had ſeen the former Temple, and its wonderful Glory, wept aloud, and their Weeping interrupted the others Expreſſions of Joy and Gladneſs. At the Reſtoration of the Temple of our Bodies, nothing will be heard but Songs of Triumph and Jubilee. Such as have ſeen with the Eyes of Faith, Man's Body as it was in the State of its Integrity, in the earthly

earthly Paradiſe, ſhall not be then ſorry, that it hath been defaced by Sin, and deſtroyed by Death. They ſhall not be ſorry for anyThing that is paſſed; they ſhall not be able to wiſh for any Increaſe of Happineſs and Glory for the future; for at the very Inſtant of its riſing from the Grave, it ſhall be raiſed to its higheſt Splendour, Happineſs, and Magnificence; ſo that it ſhall be truly ſaid, *That the Glory of this ſecond Houſe ſhall be greater than that of the firſt*, Hag. ii.

Now that we have treated ſufficiently of ſuch as ſhall riſe from their Graves, it remains that we take a View of them whoſe Bodies ſhall never be laid in the Duſt, and who ſhall be alive at Chriſt's coming down from Heaven: For that Purpoſe St. *Paul* informs us, 1 *Cor.* xv. *Behold, I ſhew you a Myſtery; we ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall be changed in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, at the Sound of the laſt Trumpet:* And he ſpeaks in this Manner to the *Theſſalonians*, 1 Theſſ. iv. *For this we ſay unto you, by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of our Lord, ſhall not prevent them that are aſleep; for the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God, and the Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt; then we which are alive, and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and we ſhall ever be with the Lord; wherefore comfort one another with theſe Words.* I know very well, that St. *Paul* tells the *Hebrews, that it is appointed unto all Men once to die:* Therefore I conceive, that this great Change that ſhall be made in the Bodies of them that ſhall be then alive, ſhall be a Kind of Death; for Chriſt will deſtroy and aboliſh altogether, in them, all Corruption and Inclination to Mortality. And when he ſhall change the Bodies of the Reprobates, he will make them like to the other Reprobates, whom he ſhall fetch out of their Graves. He will make them immortal, that they may be eternally tormented in Hell. But he will cauſe the Bodies of Believers then alive to

be like the other Believers, that they may all partake and enjoy the same Glory and eternal Bliss.

Christians, in what condition soever you be, seriously apply to yourselves, these divine Consolations. You that are grieved to see your Bodies maimed and deprived of one of your Members, of your Eyes, Hearing, or of some other of your Senses, whether you be so born, or whether such a Privation hath happened to you by a Disease, by a Mischance, or by any other Accident, rejoice and comfort yourselves with this Assurance, that you shall see one Day this wretched Body restored to a perfect State, to a Perfection that shall never be lost. You who fret and vex yourselves, to behold how old Age and Sickness have disfigured your Bodies, what Breaches and Ruins they have caused in you, comfort yourselves in Expectation of this glorious Resurrection, which shall supply this decayed and languishing Body with new Strength and Vigour, and adorn it with a perfect Beauty and an eternal Glory.

And you, whom Death undermines, and intends shortly to lay in the Dust, grieve not at it; for what you lose at present, you shall find again at the great Day of the Resurrection. When *Joseph* died, he commanded his Brethren concerning his Bones, that they should carry them out of *Egypt* into the Land of *Canaan*. Now our Bones are the Bones of Jesus Christ, our true *Joseph*. Therefore he will command his Angels to gather them up safe, he himself will have a Care to preserve them; at the great Morn of the Resurrection, he shall fetch them out of their Graves, as out of an *Egypt*, out of an House of Bondage, and will carry them to his celestial *Canaan*. When the Tabernacle was taken in Pieces, the High-priest delivered every Piece, in Charge to the *Levites*, so that when they were to set it up again, there was nothing wanting. Likewise our Saviour hath given in Charge, and delivered by Retail to our Tombs, every Member and Part of our Bodies, these Tabernacles, which he

he hath ſanctified for himſelf. Therefore they ſhall all be found again at the Reſurrection, without the leaſt Diminution. Theſe Tabernacles ſhall not only be found entire, but they ſhall be beautified with a far greater Glory and Splendour than before.

There is none but would be glad to lay himſelf down to ſleep in his Bed, and pull off his Garments willingly, if he were certain to be more healthy, and to find his Garments freſher and more beautiful in the Morning; if he were perſuaded, that, inſtead of old Rags, he were to put on a Royal Attire, and moſt magnificent Garments. Who would not willingly go out of a pitiful Cabin, and forſake a miſerable Lodge, which ſhall be one Day changed into a golden Palace adorned with precious Stones? Comfort thyſelf, believing Soul, and rejoice in God thy Redeemer; caſt off willingly this Garment that is ſo incommodious and troubleſome to thee. Forſake this wretched Body, undermined by Sickneſs and Diſeaſes, and conſumed by Time. Sleep quietly in the Lord Jeſus, and repoſe thyſelf in his Boſom; for when thou ſhalt wake again at the Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet, thou ſhalt find this Garment whiter than Snow, and as brighs as the Light. Grieve not to ſee this miſerable Dwelling fall to pieces and rot; for God ſhall build it up again with his own Hands, and convert it into his own Temple, and a Pavilion of his Glory. Thou mayeſt be ſaid ſhortly to return again, and to find this woful Lodge of Earth become an heavenly Place, purer than fine Gold, and brighter than Diamonds, Rubies, and all precious Stones. Weep not for thy beautiful Eyes, that are ſhut; nor for the reſt of thy Senſes, that are loſt; or for the Members of thy Body, that conſume away one after another. For with theſe ſame Eyes, that have loſt, or ſhall ſhortly loſe the Sight of the Day, thou ſhalt behold a divine Light, that ſhall ſhine eternally, in Heaven; thou ſhalt behold the Face of the King of Kings, and all the Glory and Magnificence of his King-

Kingdom. With theſe Ears, that are almoſt deaf, and that ſhall be ſhortly ſtopped, thou ſhalt hear, with Tranſports of Joy, the raviſhing Harmonies of the Saints, and the Songs of the bleſſed Angels. With this ſtammering Tongue, which is to loſe the Faculty of Speech, thou ſhalt ſing with a loud Voice the Praiſes of Almighty God, in the glorious Company of the Church Triumphing. With theſe unſteady Hands, that can ſcarce hold any Thing, thou ſhalt one Day receive immortal Palms, and golden Viols, which thou ſhalt never quit. With theſe Feet, that are dying, and that can ſcarce ſupport thee, thou ſhalt follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth, and thou ſhalt walk about the Streets of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*. And this ſame Body, that is going to rot, and to be turned to Duſt, ſhall one Day ſhine as the Firmament, and as the Sun in its greateſt Splendour.

What deſireſt thou more, Chriſtian Soul, for thy Comfort? What Addition can there be made to thine Happineſs? Since thou art going to the Fruition of eternal Joys, and of endleſs Pleaſures in Heaven. In the mean while, the Body ſhall endure no Pain nor Grief; and God will ſhortly raiſe it up again from this deep Sleep, that begins to dull thy Senſes, and cloſe thine Eye-lids. Shortly God will publiſh the Year of the great Jubilee; all the Priſons of Death ſhall be then opened, and the Priſoners ſhall be ſet at Liberty. Thou ſhalt ſhortly hear the Sound of the laſt Trumpet, that ſhall rouſe thee out of the Duſt, and cauſe thee to appear in the Preſence of thy great Redeemer. Thou leaveſt a wretched Body, full of Darkneſs and Corruption, aſſaulted by Death on all Sides; but ſhalt ſhortly be made incorruptible, immortal, and adorned with Light and Glory.

Let therefore thy Heart rejoice, thy Tongue be glad, and thy Fleſh reſt in Hope; for the Lord will not leave thee always in the Grave, he will not ſuffer thee to continue for ever in Duſt and Corruption; he will not only diſcover to thee the Ways of Life, but

but he will ſhortly come down himſelf from Heaven to tranſport thee thither.

When Death ſhall be upon thy Lips, when it ſhall be ready to lay thee in thy Grave, let not this diſturb the Quiet of thy Soul nor the Peace of thy Conſcience; let it not ſhake thy precious Faith that keeps thee up, nor drive thee from the Anchor of thy bleſſed Hope fixed in Heaven, where Jeſus Chriſt is entered as thy Fore-runner. In ſhort, when thy Body ſhall be all covered with Sores and Boils, as that of *Job* (*Job* xix.) when it ſhall all fall To-pieces before thine Eyes, let nothing hinder thee from crying out with this patient Man, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God, whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and mine Eyes ſhall behold, and not another.* And with St. *Paul*, Phil. iii. *We look from Heaven for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall change our vile Body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the mighty Working, whereby he is able even to ſubdue all Things unto himſelf.*

A Prayer and Meditation of a Chriſtian, who, being ready to depart out of the World, comforts himſelf with an Aſſurance and Expectation of the glorious Reſurrection of his Body from the Duſt.

O Eternal and divine Word! by whom all Things were created, and without whom was not any Thing made that was made; thou haſt not only formed our Souls, and faſhioned our Bodies with thy ſkilful Hands; but, when they were miſerably loſt and corrupted with Sin, thou haſt been pleaſed to redeem both our Souls and Bodies with thy moſt precious Blood, and to renew thy glorious Image in us. This wretched Body is but an earthen Veſſel; yet thou haſt incloſed in it the richeſt Treaſure of Life

Life and Light. Thou haſt appointed it to be the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, and a noble Pavilion of the Godhead, to participate with the Soul in the eternal Happineſs of thy Kingdom. I feel my Strength failing me, and this earthly Tabernacle decaying every Day, and every Hour, ſo that I am certain it ſhall be reduced to Duſt. But, Lord, I am ſufficiently comforted with this Knowledge, that if the outward Man decays, the inward is renewed Day by Day; if this wretched Body falls down by Death, thou wilt raiſe it up again at the general Reſurrection. My Lord and my God, thou art ſufficiently able; for all Power is given to thee in Heaven and in Earth, and the Depths of the Sea. As the Father raiſeth and quickeneth the Dead, thou doſt alſo quicken them whom thou haſt choſen. Thou haſt faſhioned my Body of Duſt, and created this Duſt of nothing; and ſhalt not thou be able of the ſame Duſt, into which this my Body ſhall be turned by Death, to make and faſhion it again? Thou haſt by thine Almighty Power created my Soul, and infuſed it into this Body; and canſt not thou command it back again, when it ſhall pleaſe thee, to live for ever in a more bleſſed Society than before? O Prince of Life, Death hath ſufficiently felt in thy Perſon thy infinite Power. Its Purpoſe was to devour thee, but thou haſt overcome it in a glorious Manner. Thou haſt yielded to die, but art returned to live for ever and ever, and haſt in thy Cuſtody the Keys of Hell and of Death, to open and ſhut, to kill and make alive at thy Pleaſure. Lord Jeſus! the Reſurrection and the Life, I know that thou art both willing and able to deliver this Body out of the Powor of Death, and awake my ſleeping Duſt with the Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet, as thou haſt promiſed. I expect to ſee that glorious Day of thy Triumph, when accompanied by all the mighty Angels of Heaven, thou wilt ſet at Liberty all the Priſoners of Death, and reſtore to us again all the Bleſſings forfeited by Sin. The Sea and the Earth ſhall ſurrender unto thee the Bodies they have in their Cuſtody, and obey thy Commands. O omnipotent Word, that made the Heavens and the Earth! Thou ſhalt be heard, and operate effectually in our Graves, that we

may

may march out, and ſtand before the dreadful Tribunal. We ſhall then appear not wrapt in our Winding-ſheets, as Lazarus, *nor with any Relicks of Infirmity, but with Bodies more beautiful, perfect, and glorious, than formerly: So that we may have good Cauſe to admire the Glory of that ſecond Building, which by thine Almighty Power thou wilt rear out of the Duſt, and which will be far greater than the preſent. For this infirm Body ſhall be made conformable to the celeſtial Body, this Corruptible ſhall put on Incorruption, and this Mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up by Immortality, and an eternal Life. I am therefore fully perſuaded, my glorious Redeemer! that with theſe languiſhing Eyes I ſhall behold thy magnificent Coming in a Cloud, ſurrounded with Flames of Fire, and ſitting on a Throne. With theſe Ears I ſhall hear the terrible and loud Voice of the Archangel's Trumpet, and the Songs of the bleſſed Companies of Heaven. With this Tongue I hope to tune forth thy divine Praiſes; with theſe dying Hands to embrace thee, my bleſſed Saviour; and with theſe trembling Feet, already in the Grave, I ſhall follow thee into thy Heavenly* Jeruſalem; *and this ſame Body, condemned to rot in a Tomb, ſhall one Day ſhine in thy heavenly Kingdom. I am ready, Lord, to depart hence, my Breath fails me, Death appears before me, threatening to ſtrike the laſt Stroke; but, notwithſtanding all Difficulties and Objections, I know I ſhall riſe again to behold thy Magnificence and Glory.* Amen.

CHAP. XXII.

The Twelfth Conſolation: *The Deſtruction of Death, and the eternal and moſt bleſſed Life which we ſhall enjoy both in Soul and Body after our Reſurrection.*

WE have ſufficiently treated of that Happineſs which is prepared for our Souls at their Departure from the Bodies, and of the glorious Reſurrection promiſed to theſe Bodies, when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall come down from Heaven in his Glory to judge the

the Quick and the Dead. It seems that we have nothing more to say; but as *Moses* when he had made the Ark of Shittim-wood, and lined it with fine Gold, he put round about a Crown of Gold upon the Top; in the same Manner, now that we have declared to you the Incorruption and future Glory of our Bodies, which are to be looked upon as a sacred Ark, where God's Majesty shall dwell for ever; now that we have shewn how, by the Almighty and Gracious Power of God, they shall become more incorruptible than the Shittim-wood, and more glorious than fine Gold; I will now, with God's Assistance, draw about them a Crown more precious than the purest Gold, and richer than all the Jewels in the World. I mean to crown this Work, and intend to end it with as perfect a Picture as I am able to draw, of the eternal Glory and Happiness whch we expect to enjoy both in Soul and Body, after our Resurrection. But first, I shall say something of the entire and perfect Destruction of all our Enemies; and represent to you the Overthrow and the final Conquest over Death.

When Jesus Christ shall appear again to judge the World in Righteousness, he shall sit upon a glorious and most splendid Throne. *Solomon's* magnificent Throne was but its Shadow, and imperfect Type: He shall then send forth his Angels, who shall gather together the *Elect*, with the *Sound of a Trumpet*, from the four Parts of the World, and from one End of the Heavens to the other. The Sight of this glorious Saviour shall then fill us with an unspeakable Joy, and cause us to burst forth into this Language, *Isa.* xxv. *Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his Salvation.* But when all the Kindreds of the Earth shall behold this magnificent King in the Clouds of Heaven, with Power and great Glory, they shall lament and strike their Breasts in Despair, they shall call to the Mountains and Rocks, *Rev.* vi. *Fall upon us, and hide us from the Face of him that sitteth upon the Throne, and from*

from the Wrath of the Lamb; for the great Day of his Wrath is come; who ſhall be able to ſtand?

Then the Lord ſhall bring to Light the hidden Things of Darkneſs, and ſhall manifeſt the Thoughts of the Heart, with the moſt ſecret Contrivances. The Books ſhall be opened, not only of the guilty Conſciences, where *Satan's* Image and Deeds ſhall be engraven, but alſo the other Books, where God himſelf hath written, with his own Finger, all our Actions, Words, and our moſt hidden Thoughts. All Men ſhall be judged according to the Things written in the Books. St. *John* declares this, in the xxth of the *Revelations: I ſaw a great white Throne, and him that ſat on it, from whoſe Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was no Place for them; and I ſaw the Dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God, the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life, and the Dead were judged out of thoſe Things which were written in the Books, according to their Works.* Unto this St. *Paul* agrees, *We muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive in his Body according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil.*

There are three Sorts of Perſons who are to ſtand before this glorious Tribunal: Such as never had any other Tutor but Nature, who were not acquainted with any other Works of God, but of Creation and Providence. For God hath not left himſelf without Witneſs in doing Good. The ſecond Sort have been aſſiſted with a divine Revelation from above, under the Law, which hath diſtinctly taught them what Works are pleaſing to God. Theſe may have heard ſomething of a *Meſſiah* from the antient Prophets, they may have ſeen his Portraiture in the Types and Shadows of *Moſes's* Ordinances. The other Sort have had the Grace of God clearly and plainly revealed to them, to whom our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath brought Life and Immortality to Light through the Goſpel. There are none of theſe Perſons, if they have lived in Impiety and Debauchery, and are dead in Impenitency, that ſhall be able to excuſe

cuſe themſelves in this dreadful Day of Judgement. But ſome are more guilty than others, therefore they ſhall be condemned to greater Puniſhments.

The Knowledge that God hath beſtowed upon Man hath been obſcured by the Prince of Darkneſs, but it hath not been totally extinct; and that Law which God hath engraven in the Soul of Man, hath not been altogether blotted out, but there remain yet ſome Relicks; ſo that no Man living can affirm, that he hath done all the good Deeds which his Conſcience was perſuaded that he ought to perform, and that he hath omitted all the evil Acts of which his Conſcience convinced him. They who have lived and are dead without any Law of God revealed to them, ſhall be judged without the Law. Such ſhall be condemned for having taken Pleaſure in extinguiſhing the Remains of their natural Light, and in ſmothering the good and rational Dictates of their Conſciences. They ſhall be condemed becauſe they have abuſed Heaven's Favours and filled themſelves with God's good Creatures, without returning to him due Thanks; and becauſe they have not meditated as they ought, upon ſo many ſtately and noble Works of Nature, nor learned by that Means to know God, who has left in theſe Works ſo many Impreſſions of his eternal Power and Godhead; and becauſe that knowing God, they have not glorified him as God. This St. *Paul* teacheth in theſe Words, *As many as have ſinned without Law, ſhall alſo periſh without Law; and as many as have ſinned in the Law, ſhall be judged by the Law (for when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law, theſe, having not the Law, are a Law unto themſelves, which ſhew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conſcience alſo bearing Witneſs, and their Thoughts the mean while accuſing or elſe excuſing one another) in the Day when God ſhall judge the Secrets of Men by Jeſus Chriſt, according to my Goſpel*, Rom. ii.

They that profeſs to know the Law, ſhall be judged by the Law; ſuch as have already heard the Thunders

of Mount *Sinai*, they ſhall one Day feel the Thunderbolts. They ſhall underſtand by Experience what it is to rebel againſt God, and to draw upon themſelves, and their guilty Heads, the dreadful Curſes of God's Law, *Deut.* xvii. *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them*, Gal. ii. There is no doubt but that the *Jews*, upon whom *Moſes* and the Prophets have ſpent ſo many fruitleſs Exhortations to live well, ſhall be puniſhed with ſharper Torments than the poor Savages, to whom God never ſent any Meſſage, who never had any Acquaintance with the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, being Strangers from the Covenant, having no Hope, and being without God in the World, *Eph.* ii. For that Servant who knoweth his Maſter's Will, and doth it not, ſhall be beaten with more Stripes than he that knoweth it not, *Luke* xii.

But no People upon Earth have Cauſe to expect and dread a more ſevere Sentence than wicked Chriſtians who make Profeſſion of knowing God, and believing in Jeſus Chriſt, who nevertheleſs deny him by their Works, and trample under Foot the Riches of his Grace. How can it be otherwiſe? For ſuch as have heard the Goſpel preached, who have ſeen Jeſus Chriſt as it were crucified before their Eyes, and yet have made no Advantage of all this, ought to be puniſhed in another Manner, than the bare Auditors of *Moſes*, that never ſaw the *Meſſias* but afar off, and in the Shadows of the ceremonial Law. Take Notice of theſe divine Expreſſions of St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, *He that deſpiſed* Moſes's *Law, died without Mercy under two or three Witneſſes; of how much ſorer Puniſhment, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy Thing, and hath done Deſpite to the Spirit of Grace? For we know him that hath ſaid, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompenſe, ſaith the Lord; and again, The Lord ſhall judge his People. It is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.* There-

fore when St. *Paul* ſpeaks of ſuch as obey not the Goſpel, he ſaith, *That they ſhall be puniſhed with eternal Puniſhments from the Preſence of God, and from the Glory of his Power.* And our Saviour teacheth us, that ſuch as reject ſo great Salvation, ſhall be puniſhed more grievouſly than the moſt abominable Sinners, unto whom it was never revealed. Therefore when he ſends forth his Apoſtles to preach, he tells them, *Whoſoever ſhall not receive you, and hear your Words, when you depart out of that Houſe or City, ſhake off the Duſt of your Feet: Verily I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for the Land of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *in the Day of Judgement, than for that City.* Likewiſe when he reproaches the Incredulity and Impenitency of the Cities that were not converted by the Preaching of his Goſpel, and the Glory of his Miracles, he tells them, *Mat.* xi. *Wo unto thee* Chorazin! *Wo unto thee,* Bethſaida! *for if the mighty Works which have been done in you, had been done in* Tyre *and* Sidon, *they would have repented long ago in Sackcloth and Aſhes. But I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for* Tyre *and* Sidon, *at the Day of Judgement, than for you. And thou* Capernaum, *which art exalted unto Heaven, ſhall be brought down to Hell. For if the mighty Works which have been done in thee, had been done in* Sodom, *it would have remained unto this Day; but I ſay unto you, that it ſhall be more tolerable for the Land of* Sodom *in the Day of Judgement than for thee.*

The Great Judge of the World ſhall place at his Left-hand all wicked Souls which have lived without any Fear of God, and without expreſſing Charity to the Members of his myſtical Body; and ſhall pronounce to them this dreadful Sentence, *Depart from me, ye Curſed, into eternal Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no Meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; ſick and in Priſon, and ye viſited me not: Verily I ſay unto you, inaſmuch as ye did it not to one of the leaſt of theſe, ye did it not to me.* But the Faithful, who have

have witneſſed their Faith by a good and holy Life, and by Works of Charity and Mercy, he will place at his Right-hand, and, in the Preſence of God, and all his holy Angels, he ſhall ſay unto them, *Come, ye Bleſſed of my Father; inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Beginning of the World; for I was an hungered and ye gave me Meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was ſick, and ye viſited me; I was in Priſon, and ye came unto me. Verily I ſay unto you, inaſmuch as ye have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

There be ſome that make this Queſtion, What Sign ſhall precede immediately, or accompany the Coming of Chriſt in the World? Our Saviour hath given Occaſion to this Demand; for when he ſpeaks of the Things that are to happen about the Time of his glorious Appearance, he ſaith, *That the Sun ſhall be darkened, the Moon ſhall not give Light, the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heavens ſhall be ſhaken, and then ſhall appear in Heaven the Sign of the Son of Man.*

Some imagaine that this Sign of the Son of Man is the Sign of the Croſs, which will be viſible in the Air. This Opinion in itſelf is harmleſs; but in regard that it hath no Foundation in holy Scripture, I am not to inſiſt upon it. Others believe that it ſhall be the Fire with which Jeſus Chriſt ſhall burn the Earth, diſſolve the Elements, and puniſh Unbelievers. This Conceit is grounded upon St. *Paul's* Words to the *Theſſalonians*, 2 Theſ. i. *It is a righteous Thing with God to recompenſe Tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, Reſt with us; when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Others conceive, that the Sign of this Son of Man is nothing elſe but the Body of Jeſus Chriſt, bearing and diſcovering the Print of the Nails in his Hands and Feet, and the Wound of the

Spear in his Side. This they gather from theſe Words, in *Rev.* i. *Behold he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo which pierced him.* There be others yet, that take it in another Senſe, and believe that there ſhall be no particular Sign, but that we muſt underſtand by this Sign of the Son of Man, all thoſe Things which ſhall declare the End of the World, and the Coming of Jeſus Chriſt to judge the Quick and the Dead. If we take the Words in this Senſe, there will be an excellent Alluſion to that which is commonly practiſed, when Kings and Princes make their publick Entry into great Cities; for their coming in is proclaimed by the Sound of a Trumpet, and by the Attendants of Majeſty, a Train and Pomp that uſually accompanies it. In the ſame Manner, the glorious Coming of Jeſus Chriſt ſhall be known by the Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet, and by the Signs and wonderful Alterations which ſhall ſuddenly happen in the Heavens. This laſt Opinion is very likely, and the former is not contrary to the Analogy of Faith.

Therefore in Matters indifferent, not plainly decided by the Word of God, we leave to every pious Soul a Liberty to chooſe that which it likes beſt.

Some enquire farther, if the Souls of the Damned go down into Hell immediately after their Egreſs out of the Body, and are tormented in an unquenchable Fire, whereof the Heat never leſſens, as the Chriſtian Religion teacheth, and as we may underſtand by the Parable of the rich Glutton; doth it not follow, that theſe Wretches are already judged? How is it then, that the Son of God will judge them again at the laſt Day, and ſend them to an everlaſting Burning prepared for the Devil and his Angels? I anſwer, Firſt, That it is no abſurdity to ſay, that one Sentence ſhall be pronounced twice; for Men are wont to read the Sentence of Doom to the Priſoner, before he is taken out of Priſon; afterwards the ſame Sentence is publiſhed in the Audience of the People, at the Time of Execution. Likewiſe, when

when the Souls of the Wicked depart out of their wretched Bodies, God pronounceth to them the Sentence of Death; but when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall ſit upon the Throne of his Glory, he ſhall publiſh the ſame Sentence before all the Men of the World, and all the Angels of Heaven. Beſides, that Sentence was never declared but to the Soul; but then it ſhall be declared to both Soul and Body, and both together ſhall be ſent to the everlaſting Burning, from whence they never ſhall be releaſed. From hence, therefore, Chriſtians, you may underſtand, that there are three Degrees of Puniſhment or Torments to the Wicked; for in this Life they have a Worm that gnaws their Bowels and Heart, and a Kind of Hell, where they ſuffer unſpeakable Torments. At that Time their Bodies are ſenſeleſs in their Graves, as the Bodies of the Righteous; but at this laſt and dreadful Day of Judgement, as the Grave ſhall reſtore all the Dead Bodies, Hell, which is the Place deſigned for the Torments of the Damned, ſhall give up all the Souls that are tormented in its Flames; and theſe curſed Souls ſhall be ſent back to their Miſerable Bodies to ſuffer the Pangs of an eternal Death, *Rev.* xx. Thus they ſhall be caſt Body and Soul into the Bottomleſs Pit, where there is Weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth. At that Time the Beaſt, the falſe Prophet, and all the Enemies of God and of his Church, ſhall be caſt alive into the Lake burning with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death, *Rev.* xx. 10, 11. And when all theſe Offenders ſhall be executed, the Executioners themſelves ſhall be puniſhed for their Crimes; when the Damned ſhall be caſt into Eternal Tortures, the Devils and infernal Furies ſhall be ſent after them; as it is ſaid, *The Devil who ſeduced the Nations, ſhall be caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, where the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet are, and ſhall be tormented Day and Night for ever and ever*, Rev. xx. 10. What a dreadful Sight will it be to look upon all thoſe roaring Lions, thoſe furious Dragons in their Rage vo-

miting forth Fire and Flames? What a joyful Spectacle ſhall this be to the Children of God, to look upon theſe infernal Devils, bound faſt with thoſe Chains which they ſhall never be able to break, and ſhut up in the bottomleſs Pit, out of which they never ſhall be releaſed!

Our Lord ſhall caſt into this Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, and ſhut up in this Bottomleſs Pit, not only the Devil and his Angels, the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet, and in general all wicked Souls and Unbelievers, but he ſhall caſt therein alſo Death and the Grave, or rather, he ſhall aboliſh them for ever. As *Joſhua* when he conquered the Kings of the *Amorites*, put them not to Death until he had overcome all his Enemies; likewiſe our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, our true *Joſhua*, has encountered with Death upon the Croſs, and overcome it by his Reſurrection; but he will not deſtroy it altogether until the laſt Day, when he ſhall come to judge the World. Then to perfect all his glorious Victories, he ſhall deſtroy this laſt Enemy, this Deſtroyer of his Brethren, and of his Members; ſo that *Death ſhall be no more*. It ſhall be no more for the Wicked, they ſhall ſeek it in vain to be freed from their Torments. It ſhall fly away from them as a Shadow that departs, and is no more to be found. Death ſhall be no more for God's Children; for it ſhall never diſturb their Reſt and Happineſs.

If the old Serpent could enter into Paradiſe, we ſhould fear his Temptations and inflamed Darts; and if Death continued in its Empire, we ſhould dread its Approaches: But then it ſhall not have the leaſt Power, it ſhall be totally aboliſhed; and all the Living ſhall become immortal. And although God will not deſtroy the Being, nor take away the Malice of the Devil; yet to us he ſhall be as if he were not; for he ſhall never be able to break his Chains, or to eſcape out of his Priſon; and between him and us there ſhall be Depths that can never be filled. So that as *Moſes* when he caſt his Eye upon *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, who

who purſued the frighted *Iſraelites*, he told them, *Stand ſtill, and ſee the Salvation of the Lord, which he will ſhew to you To-Day; for the* Egyptians, *whom you have ſeen To-Day, ye ſhall ſee them again no more for ever*; likewiſe when ye think upon *Satan*, and all his infernal Armies that purſue you, you may ſay with Confidence, Settle your Minds, Chriſtian Souls, and with the Eye of Faith behold the Salvation of the Lord; for theſe helliſh Furies, that have perſecuted you ſo long, ſhall be reduced to that Condition, that they ſhall not be able to do you the leaſt Diſpleaſure, or to give you any Apprehenſion. God is going to drown them in the Red-ſea of his Wrath, and to ſhut them up for ever in the bottomleſs Pit of his juſt Revenge. So that, as in the heavenly Paradiſe, there ſhall be neither Pain, nor Sorrow, nor Grief, nor Crying, nor Sighs heard, likewiſe there ſhall never be any Fear or Fright, or the leaſt Alarm; but we ſhall live there in a ſettled Peace and Quiet for ever.

It is reported of the *Macedonians*, that they wept for Joy, when they beheld their King *Alexander the Great* ſeated on the Throne of *Darius*, and trampling under Feet the Pride and Empire of *Perſia*. But how exceeding great ſhall our Joy be, when we ſhall behold Jeſus Chriſt, our great Monarch, ſitting upon the Throne of God, and trampling under Feet the Pomp of the World, cruſhing the Red Dragon, and all the tyrannical Powers of Hell! The Glory of *Alexander* vaniſhed away with his Breath; Death deſtroyed all his Trophies: But our Lord ſhall triumph over Death itſelf; it ſhall be the laſt Act of his eternal Juſtice, to deſtroy the great Murderer from the Beginning.

At that Time there ſhall be no more Enemies to encounter with, no Evils to be feared, neither ſhall there be any Advantages to be deſired, nor Honours to be expected; for God will admit us to the bottomleſs Ocean of the moſt divine Pleaſures, and raiſe us up to the higheſt Glory that Nature ſhall be capable of. This Happineſs, and this Glory, ſhall be infinite in regard of its Durance. It ſhall not be like

the Pomp and Magnificence of the Kings and Princes of this World, which vaniſhed away in an Inſtant, nor like to the Brightneſs of *Moſes's* Face, which departed with his Life; nor like the Transfiguration of Chriſt upon Mount *Tabor*, which ſoon diſappeared. For when it ſhall have continued as many hundred Ages as there are Stars in the Firmament, it ſhall then but begin and appear in its Riſing; ſo that there we may have juſt Cauſe, and more Reaſon than St. *Peter*, to ſay, *Lord, it is good for us to be here*. There is no Place in the World ſo pleaſant and delightful, but at laſt one ſhall be weary to continue in it; nor Company ſo amiable and ſweet, but becomes tedious in Time; nor Pleaſure ſo raviſhing, but gives a Diſtaſte. The greateſt Perſons on Earth ſigh under the Burden of their Greatneſs; the Brightneſs of their Glory dazzles them: When nothing troubles them, they are troubled of their own Accord, and their moſt magnificent Triumphs diſturb and weary them. Oft-times their Heart groans in the midſt of the greateſt Acclamations, and publick Applauſe; they think themſelves more unhappy than thoſe who envy their apparent Happineſs. For all that ſhines is not Gold; the moſt beautiful Roſes are not without their Prickles, and many Times they hide dangerous Serpents.

As the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe is infinite in regard of its Durance, ſo in reſpect of its Dignity and Excellency. For God will not only ſatisfy all our Deſires, and anſwer all our Expectations, but he will alſo give to us above all that we can aſk or think.

Shall I undertake to paint out unto you this Glory, and perfect Happineſs? When St. *Paul* ſpeaks of theſe Evangelical Myſteries, he aſſures us, that they are Things that the Eye of Man hath never ſeen, that his Ear hath never heard, and that never entered into his Heart, 1 *Cor.* ii. If this hath been ſpoken of the Doctrine that reveals this Glory and eternal Happineſs; how are we able to comprehend the

the Glory and Happineſs itſelf? Therefore the ſame Apoſtle tells us in another Place, *That God worketh in us abundantly, above that we are able to aſk or think*, Eph. iii. I cannot boaſt of having ſpoken with God Face to Face, as *Moſes*, *Numb.* xi. of having been raviſhed, as St. *Paul*, into the third Heaven, 1 *Cor.* xii. God hath not carried me up, as St. *John*, into the celeſtial *Jeruſalem*; neither hath he delivered to me, as to his holy Angels, a Reed to meaſure the holy City. But when I ſhould have enjoyed theſe glorious Privileges, this divine Entertainment, theſe ſupernatural Elevations, when I ſhould have walked about, and taken a full View of the celeſtial *Jeruſalem*, when I ſhould have been in the Company of the Seraphims that fly about God's Throne, when I ſhould have beheld God Face to Face, although I were the moſt eloquent of all Men, and ſpoke with the Tongues of Angels, and had in my Hand the Pencil of an Archangel, I ſhould not dare to undertake to repreſent this exceeding great Glory, nor to paint out to you the Brightneſs of that heavenly Light; whereof the leaſt Beam is able to dazzle me. St. *Paul* had been near the Body of this great Light; he had beheld the Riches and Glory of Paradiſe; yet he confeſſeth, that they be Things not to be expreſſed by any Tongue.

But as thoſe who cannot caſt their Eyes directly to look upon the Sun, becauſe it blinds them with its exceeding great Light, behold its body with more Eaſe and Leiſure in the Water, or in a Looking-glaſs; thus we ſhall conſider and look upon the Images which God himſelf hath expreſſed for us in his holy Word, of this divine Brightneſs of Heaven, which we are not able otherwiſe to comprehend. For God hath dealt with us as a Father doth with his young Babes, who babbles with them, and repreſents to them the Light of the Sun with a black Coal; or as the Aſtrologers, who repreſent the heavenly Conſtellations by the Figure of Birds, or four-footed Beaſts, and of creeping Things.

For

For nothing can enter into our Underſtanding, but by the Door of our Senſes; therefore ſpiritual and celeſtial Things are repreſented under the Notion of corporeal and earthly Enjoyments, which we paſſionately love. And becauſe there is not one Thing here below, that can expreſs to us the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe; ſo many Perfections are not to be found in any one Enjoyment; therefore the Holy Ghoſt gathers together all the Excellencies, Riches, and Beauty, ſcattered about in the inferior Creatures, and borrows the Ideas and Notions of thoſe Things that are rareſt and moſt glorious, and that give us the greateſt Pleaſure and Satisfaction, to repreſent to us the Glory of Heaven.

To begin, in the firſt Place with the Word *Paradiſe*; it ſignifies a delightful and a pleaſant Garden, it is often made uſe of to expreſs to us the Joys and Happineſs of the Life to come, and to make us ſenſible, that what we have loſt by *Adam*, is reſtored to us by Jeſus Chriſt. Our Lord and Saviour, who is Goodneſs itſelf, ſhall beſtow upon us another *Eden*, another Garden of Pleaſure, watered with living Water. In the Midſt of it is the Tree of Life, that brings forth its Fruits every Month. Inſtead of an earthly Paradiſe, ſubject to Change, we ſhall find an heavenly and an unchangeable Paradiſe. The earthly Paradiſe is no more to be ſeen; it is thought that it was ſwallowed up and deſtroyed by the Waters of the Deluge; but the heavenly Paradiſe can never be deſtroyed by the fierceſt Fire, nor by the moſt ſwelling Waves. It is above all Winds, Storms, and Tempeſts: Therefore St. *Peter* aſſures us *that it is an incorruptible Inheritance, that fadeth not away.* It hath no need of an elemental Water; for it is watered every where with the River of living Water, that proceeds from the Throne of God and the Lamb. And whereas Cherubims, armed with a flaming Sword, ſtood at the Entrance of the earthly Paradiſe, to hinder *Adam* from approaching near to the Tree of Life, and from gathering of its Fruits; now whole Legions of Cherubims

bims are to carry us up upon their Wings to the true Tree of Life which ſtands in the Midſt of the heavenly Paradiſe; and Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, the Prince of all the Angels, of all the Cherubims and Seraphims, promiſeth to admit us to partake of its delicious Fruits, by theſe bleſſed Words, *To him that ſhall overcome, I will give him to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the Midſt of the Paradiſe of God.*

It is the common Cuſtom of Men to have an high Eſteem of beautiful and great Cities, whereof the Buildings are ſtately, and the Inhabitants numerous: Therefore the *Jews* were wont to boaſt of *Jeruſalem*, and to call it, *The City perfect in Beauty, The Joy of the whole Earth.* Therefore the Holy Ghoſt repreſents to us the Glory and Happineſs of Heaven, by a City which he names *Jeruſalem.* And St. *Paul*, in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* makes the ſame Alluſion. For when he had ſaid, *That* Abraham *by Faith had ſojourned in the Land of Promiſe, as in a ſtrange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with* Iſaac *and* Jacob, *the Heirs with him of the ſame promiſe*; he adds immediately after, *For he looked for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God*; and a little after, *God is not aſhamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a City*, Heb. xi. And in the xiith Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle, he ſpeaks to Believers in this Manner; *Ye are come to Mount* Sion, *and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly* Jeruſalem, *and to an innumerable Company of Angels.* And elſewhere, *We have no continuing City here below; but we ſeek one to come*, Heb. xiii. 14.

God is pleaſed, not only to deſcribe to us our future Paradiſe, under the general Notion of a City, and of *Jeruſalem*, but he diſcovers to us its heavenly Beauty, its Glory, and Magnificence. You cannot find a richer and more excellent Image than that of St. *John*, who himſelf had been a Spectator of the *New Jeruſalem*, and had beheld all its Rarities and Wonders. For when the Angel, who had in his Hand

a golden Reed to meaſure this glorious City, had ſaid unto him, *Come, I will ſhew thee the Spouſe, the Wife of the Lamb*; he carried him in the Spirit to an high Mountain, from whence he had a proſpect of this great and holy City *Jeruſalem*, which came down from Heaven from God, decked as a Spouſe prepared for her Huſband, having the Glory of God and his Light. This faithful Witneſs aſſures us, that its Buildings, and the Streets of this bleſſed City, were all of fine Gold, as bright as Cryſtal; its Foundations were of precious Stones; its twelve Gates were twelve Pearls; at each of them ſtood an Angel of God. This holy City had no need of the Light of the Sun, or of the Light of the Moon; for the Light of God enlightens it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof: There is no Temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it.

It is our Delight to abide in ſtately and magnificent Houſes, and in rich and glorious Palaces: Therefore Paradiſe is expreſſed to us by a Dwelling, and by a Palace, which God himſelf hath built with his own Hands. This is the Picture the Royal Prophet repreſents to us in *Pſal.* lxv. when he ſpeaks of *God's Houſe, and of the holy Place of his Palace.* And St. *Paul* doth the like in 1 *Cor.* v. when he ſaith, *We know that if our earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a Building of God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* And our Saviour, when he was ready to leave the World, comforts his Apoſtles in this Manner; *In my Father's Houſe are many Manſions; I go to prepare a Place for you.* And St. *John* heard a mighty Voice from Heaven, ſaying, *Behold the Tabernacle of God is with Men; he ſhall dwell with them, and they ſhall be his People; and God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God.*

Every one deſires to be rich; there be ſome that eſteem it their chief Happineſs; therefore the Holy Ghoſt repreſents the Happineſs of Heaven under the Notion of Riches and Treaſure: Our Saviour himſelf

ſpeaks

ſpeaks of it in this manner, in the vith of St. *Matthew*; *Lay not up for yourſelves Treaſures upon Earth, where Moth and Ruſt doth corrupt, and where Thieves break through and ſteal: but lay up for yourſelves Treaſures in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Ruſt doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through and ſteal.* Therefore when the Holy Ghoſt deſcribes Heaven's Glory, and mentions Gold, Pearls, and precious Stones, it hath a Regard to this Notion.

And becauſe Men are for the moſt Part deſirous of Honours, Greatneſs, and Dignities; and that there is nothing in the World more eſteemed than Sceptres and Crowns; therefore the Glory of Heaven is expreſſed by a Kingdom, by Thrones, Crowns, and Triumphs. Our Saviour ſpeaks in this Language to his Apoſtles, *To you who have continued with me in my Afflictions, I appoint a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me,* Luke xxii. In another Place he ſpeaks of all his Church in general, *Fear not, little Flock; for it is your Father's Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom,* Luke xx. And at the laſt Day he will ſay, *Come ye Bleſſed of my Father; inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World,* Matth. xxv. And to the Angel of his Church at *Smyrna,* and the faithful Souls, this Divine Saviour makes this Promiſe; *Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life,* Rev. ii. And to the Angel of the Church of *Laodicea*; *To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne,* Rev. iii. And St. *Paul* tells us, *That we run to obtain an incorruptible Crown,* 1 Cor. ix. And when he ſaw himſelf at the End of his Race, he cries out, *I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give me at that Day, and not to me only, but unto all them alſo that love his Appearing,* 2 Tim. iv. And St. *James* ſpeaks in the ſame Language, *Bleſſed is the*

Man that endureth Temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him, James i. Finally, we read that the glorified Saints have Palms in their Hands, and Crowns of Gold upon their Heads, and in their Mouths Songs of Praise: They speak thus to our Saviour: *Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation; and hast made us to our God, Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on Earth*, Rev. iv. 4.

The great Men of the World delight in gorgeous Apparel, some in perfumed Garments; therefore the Holy Ghost condescends to this Weakness of Man, and promiseth in Heaven Robes more fragrant than the Perfumes of *Arabia*. He promiseth a Garment whiter than Snow, and brighter than the Light itself. And *Solomon*, when he considers his Spouse as the Type of the Church, he saith, *The King's Daughter is full of Glory within; her Clothing is of wrought Gold; she shall be brought unto the King in Raiment of Needle-work*.

And when God himself speaks of the Glory of his Church, which he begins now, and will perfect hereafter, he saith, that he hath adorned her with Gold, Silver, and precious Stones; that he hath clothed her with fine Linen, with Silk and Needle-work. Therefore the Church speaks in this manner: I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation; he hath covered me with the Robes of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth herself with her Jewels. And if you take Notice of such as stand before the Throne of God, and the Presence of the Lamb, that worship him Day and Night in his Temple, you will find them clothed with long Robes, whitened in the Blood of the Lamb. Look also upon that magnificent Woman of the *Revelations*, the true Type and Representation of the Church, and you shall see her clothed with the Sun, and a Crown

of

of twelve Stars upon her Head. In a Word, hearken to the Song of the glorified Saints, and you ſhall hear them ſpeaking to one another, *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give Honour to God; for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made herſelf ready; and to her was granted, that ſhe ſhould be arrayed in fine Linen, clean and white; for the fine Linen is the Righteouſneſs of Saints.*

Men commonly love good Chear, and to partake of ſumptuous Feaſts; therefore the heavenly Delights are repreſented to us under the Notion of delicious Meats, and exquiſite Drinks, of noble Feaſts, and magnificent Banquets. In this manner the Royal Prophet ſpeaks to them in the xxxvith Pſalm. *How excellent is thy Loving-kindneſs, O God! Therefore the Children of Men put their Truſt under the Shadow of thy Wings; they ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy Houſe, and thou ſhalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleaſures.* And in the lxvth Pſalm, *Bleſſed is the Man whom thou chuſeſt, and cauſeſt to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts; he ſhall be ſatisfied with the Goodneſs of thy Houſe, even of thy holy Temple.* And the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks in the ſame Language, *In this Mountain ſhall the Lord of Hoſts make unto all People a Feaſt of fat Things; a Feaſt of Wine on the Lees, of fat Things full of Marrow, of Wine on the Lees well refined.* This Conſideration cauſeth a Doctor in the Goſpel to ſay, *Bleſſed is he that ſhall eat Bread in the Kingdom of Heaven.* And our Saviour himſelf ſaith, that many ſhall come from the *Eaſt and from the Weſt; and ſhall ſit at Table in the Kingdom of Heaven with* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob. *Ahaſuerus's* Feaſt continued an hundred Days; but the Feaſt which we ſhall celebrate in Heaven, and which hath been preparing from the Foundation of the World, ſhall continue for all Eternity.

Of all Feaſts, ſuch as are for nuptial Solemnities are moſt eſteemed, when they are for Kings and Princes of the Earth; for on ſuch Occaſions there are the greateſt and moſt extraordinary Rejoicings; therefore the Happineſs of Heaven is expreſſed by a Marriage.

Our

Our Saviour himſelf makes Uſe of this Compariſon in the xiiith Chapter of St. *Matthew*. *The Kingdom of God*, ſaith he, *is like unto a King which made a Marriage for his Son.* This cauſed the glorious Church to ſpeak in this Manner; *Let us rejoice and be glad, and give Glory to the Lord our God; for the Marriage of the Lamb is come.* Finally, the Holy Ghoſt hath commanded to write and record theſe Words for ever; *Bleſſed are thoſe that are called to the Marriage Feaſt of the Lamb.*

Some Perſons are very much delighted with the ſweet and pleaſant Concerts of Muſick: Therefore the Holy Ghoſt, to ſignify to us that in Heaven there ſhall be all Manner of Pleaſures and nothing wanting, tells us, that about God's Throne Millions of Angels and glorified Saints ſhall ſing forth the divine Praiſe. Beſides he acquaints us with the Subſtance of their heavenly Songs: When *Iſaiah* mentions theſe wonderful *Seraphims* that fly round about God's glorious Throne, he ſaith, *That they cry one to another, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hoſts, the whole Earth is full of thy Glory.* And when St. *John* ſpeaks of thoſe glorified Saints, he ſaith that they ſtand before his magnificent Throne, playing with their Harps, and ſinging a new Song, that it is to ſay, a moſt rare and excellent Song; and that they have always in their Mouths the Song of *Moſes* and of the Lamb; and that Heaven itſelf reſounds with their ſacred *Hallelujahs*, which ſignifies, *Praiſe God*, or *Set forth the Praiſes of God.* There is no ingenuous Soul but loves Peace and Reſt; for this Cauſe the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe is repreſented under this lovely and pleaſant Notion, as in the ivth Chapter of the *Hebrews*; *For we which have believed, do enter into Reſt, as he ſaid, As I have ſworn in my Wrath, if they ſhall enter into my Reſt. For if Jeſus had given them Reſt, then would he not afterwards have ſpoken of another Day; there remaineth therefore a Reſt to the People of God; for he that is entered into his Reſt, he alſo hath ceaſed from his own Works, as God did from his,*

his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that Rest. This caused old *Simeon* to cry out, *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace.* Finally, the holy City is called *Jerusalem*, which signifies *a Vision of Peace*: And God himself makes this Promise, *Behold, I will extend Peace to her as a River*, Isa. lxv. Wherefore if this Peace which God grants to believing Souls in this Life, surpasseth all Understanding, *Phil.* iv. what may we judge shall be the full Enjoyment of an eternal Peace in the Kingdom of Heaven? The Tongues of Men and Angels are not able to express its Dignity and Excellency.

Lastly, Because Men are Lovers of Pleasures, Delights, and Pomp; and that the most Part seek for nothing but how to drive away their Sorrows, and to recreate themselves with Pastimes; therefore the Felicities of Paradise are represented by Rejoicings, Pleasures, and eternal Solemnities, as in *Psal.* xxxvi. *Thou shalt cause them to drink of the River of thy Pleasure.* And in *Psalm* cxxvi. *They that sow in Tears, shall reap in Joy.* And God himself, speaking of that most blessed Time, saith, *Behold, I create new Heavens and a new Earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into Mind; but be you glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create* Jerusalem *a Rejoicing; and her People a Joy.* Therefore when the Holy Ghost represents the Condition of the glorified Saints, he declares not only, that God will wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and that there shall be no more Sorrow, nor Crying, nor Labour, nor Pain, nor Grief; but he adds, over and above, that in their Mouths there shall be Songs of Praise, and upon their Heads an eternal Joy of Gladness like to a precious Crown, which shall never be taken from them. For this Cause they call so earnestly upon one another, *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give Glory to the Lord our God*, Rev. xix.

All our Senses shall partake in these heavenly and everlasting Pleasures; our Eyes shall behold with Transports of Joy the sacred Countenance of our

Redeemer, the Riches and wonderful Beauty of his Palace, the Glory and Magnificence of his Empire; our Ears ſhall be delighted with the Muſick of the bleſſed Saints, and with the Harmonies of Angels, and of the Church triumphant: our Smelling ſhall receive the ſweet Perfumes of the Bridegroom, whoſe Garments are of Myrrh, and the grateful Odours of his Vine always bloſſoming. Our Palate ſhall taſte the Bread of Angels, the hidden Manna, the Fruits of the Tree of Life, the Waters iſſuing forth to everlaſting Life, and the new Wine of the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Hands ſhall embrace the Saviour of the World, and with our Feet we ſhall walk about the Streets of that golden City, the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and we ſhall follow the Lamb whereſoever he goeth, *Rev.* xiv.

Although I ſpeak to you in this Manner, I am perſuaded, *Chriſtian Souls*, that you underſtand very well, that theſe Expreſſions, and ſuch like, are not to be underſtood in a literal Senſe; they are but dark Shadows, and imperfect Images, of the Advantages of the Life to come. You have not forgot what St. *Paul* ſaith, *That there are Things which Eye hath not ſeen, Ear hath not heard, and which never entered into the Heart of Man, which God hath prepared for them that love him*, 1 Cor. ii. And that this great God, whoſe Riches are inexhauſtible, doth in us abundantly above what we are able to aſk or think, *Eph.* iii. So that when you ſee before you all the moſt beautiful, amiable, glorious, and excellent Things in the World, you may ſay in yourſelves, Without Doubt the Glory and Happineſs of Heaven is ſomething more than all this; for it is elevated ſo much above all earthly Enjoyments, and ſurpaſſeth ſo much all the Thoughts and Conceits of Man, that it is not poſſible to deſcribe it in its own Colours, nor to fancy it really as it is.

Think not therefore, *Chriſtian Souls*, to meet in Heaven with a Paradiſe ſomething like to your Gardens; nor with Flowers like to ſuch as adorn your pleaſant Walks and Fields; nor Fruits like to ſuch

as hang upon your Trees: You may be aſſured, that God will diſcover Things infinitely more pleaſant and delightful, and more laſting. Fancy not ſuch a City, built up as ours is, where Gold, Silver, Pearls, and precious Stones are to be ſeen. You may expect ſomething more noble and magnificent, than all the richeſt and moſt ſtately Cities of the World. God will cauſe you to ſee, not only the Beauty of Silver, the Purity of Gold, the Whiteneſs of Pearls, and the Brightneſs of precious Stones; but you ſhall diſcover ſomething more beautiful, purer, whiter, brighter, and ſomething more ſurpriſing, than any earthly Thing. Think not to receive any material Crown, or to aſcend upon Thrones, like to thoſe of Kings and Princes; you may juſtly fancy ſomething more glorious, and more laſting.

I am alſo perſuaded, Chriſtians, that you expect not in Heaven to find Tables covered, as thoſe of the rich Worldlings, nor to glut yourſelves with a Feaſt, like that of the Nuptials of earthly Princes; without Doubt, your Faith hath an Eye to ſomething more heavenly and glorious. Your Soul hungers for more exquiſite Dainties, and is a-thirſt for more delicious and ſweeter Drinks. You are too well inſtructed to think to live in Heaven an animal and ſenſual Life. Such a groſs Conceit becomes only the Impoſtor *Mahomet*, and his imaginary Paradiſe.

In this Life that we lead upon Earth, there are two Things which chiefly diſcover our natural Infirmity: The firſt is, our Eating and Drinking, abſolutely neceſſary to make up the Breaches cauſed by Labour, and the natural Heat, which ſpend and feed upon the radical Humour, which ſerves to our Life as Oil to a Lamp. The other is Marriage, appointed by God for the Continuance and Propagation of the human Race. But in Heaven our Life ſhall be altogether angelical, ſpiritual, and ſupernatural. Our Bodies ſhall be no more ſubject to Corruption, nor to any Alteration; they ſhall want no more Food than the Stars do at preſent, and the reſt of the celeſtial Bodies. Therefore the Holy Ghoſt

ſpeaks expreſsly, that we ſhall neither hunger nor thirſt, that the Sun ſhall not burn, nor any other Heat trouble us. That is to ſay, we ſhall never be inclinable to eat or drink; the moſt burning Heats, and the fierceſt Flames, ſhall have no Power to hurt our Bodies, when they ſhall caſt off all ſenſual and earthly Qualities, and inſtead of them, ſhall be clothed with Light and Glory. Therefore at that Time there ſhall be no Need of propagating the Species, or of multiplying the Perſons by Marriage; for we ſhall not be then ſubject to earthly Paſſions, and the Number of the Elect ſhall be complete. The Congregation of the Saints ſhall be full, and the Building of the Church ſhall be perfectly made up. Therefore our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt aſſures us, that in the Kingdom of Heaven they ſhall neither take nor give in Marriage, but that we ſhall be like the Angels of God; we ſhall enjoy the Light of their Underſtanding, the Holineſs of their Wills, and the Purity of their Affections.

When the Queen of *Sheba* ſaw the Glory and State of King *Solomon*, and heard all his excellent Diſcourſes, ſhe was raviſhed in Admiration, and told this great Prince, *It was a true Report that I heard in mine own Land of thine Acts, and of thy Wiſdom; howbeit, I believed not the Words, until I came and mine Eyes had ſeen it; and, behold, the Half was not told me; thy Wiſdom and Proſperity exceedeth the Fame which I heard; happy are thy Men, happy are theſe thy Servants which ſtand continually before thee, and hear thy Wiſdom.* I am perſuaded, believing Souls, that ſomething like to this ſhall happen to us, when we ſhall come to the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, to behold our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, of whom *Solomon* was but a Type and a Figure; for he had but a Spark of his Glory, and but a Beam of his Wiſdom. When we ſhall ſee this peaceable King crowned with an heavenly Rainbow, we ſhall be raviſhed into Admiration, and as it were tranſported out of ourſelves; then we ſhall ſpeak in this Manner to his divine Majeſty, O glorious

glorious Monarch, all that I have ever heard or imagined of thy Wiſdom, of thy Glory, Riches, Beauty, and extraordinary Pleaſure of thy Paradiſe, is leſs than true; for it is not the thouſandth Part of that which I ſee this Day. O bleſſed are they that dwell in thy Houſe, and that praiſe thee without ceaſing. Happy are they who behold thy glorious Face, and hear thy divine Wiſdom. After that the Queen of *Sheba* had been ſome Time in the Court of King *Solomon*, ſhe returned back to her own Home; but when we ſhall be once entered into the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe, we ſhall never depart out again. We ſhall behold continually this glorious King of Kings; and we ſhall hear with divine Tranſports of Joy, the wonderful Expreſſions of his Wiſdom; we ſhall not only be with him for ever and ever; but we ſhall always be in him, and he in us.

To take off your Mind from all carnal and worldly Thoughts, the Glory and Happineſs of Paradiſe is repreſented to us by the Light, as in *Dan.* xii. *They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars, for ever and ever.* And in *Matth.* xiii. our Saviour ſaith expreſsly, *That the Righteous ſhall ſhine as the Sun in the Kingdom of his Father.*

Finally, It is promiſed as the higheſt Glory and Happineſs, that we ſhall ſtand before the Throne of God, that we ſhall ſit with Jeſus Chriſt upon his Throne, and that we ſhall ſee his Face. St. *John* in *Rev.* xxii. ſpeaks in this Manner, in the Deſcription of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, he ſaith, that the Throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it; that his Servants ſhall ſerve him and ſee his Face, and that his Name ſhall be upon their Forehead. When we look upon the Sun, our Faces become not brighter, nor more luminous, nay, many Times our Eyes thereby dazzle, and our Skin becomes blacker and more ſwarthy: But when we look upon God in his Love and Glory, we ſhall be perfectly enlightened, and become

brighter and more ſhining. This appears by *Moſes's* Perſon; when he came down from the Holy Mountain, his Face was full of Beams of Light, ſo that the Children of *Iſrael* could not endure his Splendour. If therefore this faithful Servant of God had ſuch a bright Countenance, by his Continuance with God upon an Earthly Mountain, during the Space of Forty Days and Forty Nights, and by a Sight of ſome light Expreſſions of his Glory; what will be, think ye, your Light, and the Brightneſs of your Countenances, when you ſhall be raiſed above the Heavens, to continue with God, and to behold his Face Thouſands and Thouſands of Ages, and at the End of all that Time, it ſhall be but the Beginning of that moſt bleſſed Contemplation which ſhall never end?

When we caſt our Eyes upon a beautiful Perſon, we become neither more beautiful nor happier: Nothing but an unprofitable *Idea* remains in our Fancy, and many Times that alſo quickly vaniſheth away. But when we ſhall look upon God, we ſhall become like him, and in this Likeneſs we ſhall find Fulneſs of Joy, of Happineſs and Glory; this is promiſed to us by the Royal Prophet in *Pſalm* xvi. *In thy Preſence, O God, is Fulneſs of Joy; and at thy Right-hand there are Pleaſures for evermore.* And in *Pſal.* xvii. *As for me, I will behold thy Face in Righteouſneſs; I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake, with thy Likeneſs.* And the beloved Diſciple, of the beloved of the Father, whoſe Writings are full of Love, confirms this Truth: *Beloved,* ſaith he, *now we are the Sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be; but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is.*

You ſee therefore, Chriſtian Souls, to what a high Perfection of Glory and Felicity we have a Right to pretend. For in Heaven God ſhall not only make us ſhine as the Sun and the Stars, he ſhall not only cloath us with the Brightneſs of the glorified Saints and Angels; but he promiſes a great deal more, to make

make us like to himſelf; he ſhall not only ſatisfy us with the Fatneſs of his Houſe, and cauſe us to drink of the Rivers of his Pleaſures; he ſhall not only fill us with his Treaſures, enlighten us with his Brightneſs, cloth us with his Honours, and crown us with his Glory; but he himſelf will become our Meat and our Drink, our Treaſure, our Sun and Glory: And, if I may ſo ſpeak, to ſatisfy and perfect our Happineſs, God ſhall as it were diſſolve himſelf into Rivers and Seas of divine and unſpeakable Pleaſures. But, that I may not be miſunderſtood in ſuch bold and figurative Language, it ſhall ſuffice me to ſay with St. *Paul*, *That God will be in us All in all*; that is to ſay, that he will dwell and make his Abode in us, in reſpect of his Being; and that he will cauſe us to feel in his glorious Preſence, as much as a finite and a limited Nature, as ours, is capable of. What the *Jews* have invented of the *Manna* which their Fathers fed on in the Wilderneſs may juſtly be appropriated to Almighty God, as he intends to reveal himſelf to us in Heaven. For there is no Taſte but ſhall be ſatisfied, no Deſire but ſhall be filled. Moreover, God ſhall be our Meat and our Drink, our Light, alſo our Clothing, and all that we can imagine; in him and his divine Enjoyments, we ſhall find beyond all that we can think or deſire. The Knowledge of ſpiritual and celeſtial Things, which we can attain to here below, is like the Breaking of the Day; and that we ſhall enjoy hereafter ſhall be like that of the Sun, when it ſhines in our Meridian. But, to ſpeak in the Apoſtle's Language, *Now we know in part, and we prophecy in part; but when that which is perfect ſhall come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away. For now we ſee through a Glaſs darkly; but then we ſhall ſee him Face to Face.* Whilſt we continue in this Life, God diſcovers to us only the Borders of his Wiſdom; we cannot underſtand much of it. But, in the Life to come, he ſhall reveal to us the Depths of his glorious Myſteries, into which the Angels themſelves deſire to pry. In our Underſtandings. God ſhall be

as a Sun, to enlighten them for ever and ever; and to ſcatter away all Miſts of Errors and Miſtakes. At preſent our Will hath its Imperfections, and oft-times it rebels againſt God; but then it ſhall be perfectly ſanctified and reformed according to the Image of God. It ſhall burn with an holy Zeal, and with a Love for him. It ſhall deſire nothing but his Glory, and a Conformity to his holy Will. It ſhall not only obey God without Reſiſtance, but it ſhall fly, with an holy Earneſtneſs and Speed, to the Performance of his ſacred Commands. Whilſt we remain in the Fetters of this infirm and ſinful Fleſh, there is always ſome Filth and Diſorder in our Affections; but when we ſhall come to this State of Glory, God will ſanctify them in ſuch a manner by his holy Preſence, that they ſhall be purer and clearer than the Stars or the Sun-beams; they ſhall become celeſtial Fires, and divine Flames, proceeding from God's Love to us. In a Word, that Being of Beings, who is Perfection itſelf, that Author and Origin of all Beauty, that Object ſo exceeding glorious and lovely, ſhall raviſh us in ſuch a Manner, that our Underſtandings ſhall be continually employed in beholding him; our Wills and Affections in loving and embracing him; and all the Faculties of our Souls ſhall labour to be united to him, and to be like him. It ſhall be in this Manner that we ſhall be made Partakers of the divine Nature. For we muſt not fancy that we ſhall be made Partakers of God's infinite Being; for his divine Eſſence is indiviſible, and uncommunicable to the Creature, ſo that none but God can enjoy it. But God's Holineſs ſhall imprint in our Souls its bleſſed and glorious Image, and that of all its wonderful Perfections; when God ſhall ſhew himſelf to us as he is, he will cauſe us to become like him, by producing in us an Impreſſion of his divine Countenance.

It may be you will enquire of me, Whether we ſhall ſee God, and how we ſhall behold him? This Queſtion is ſo rich and conſiderable, that it deſerves to be

examined

examined with an holy and religious Application. I am perſuaded, Chriſtians, that you will not be diſpleaſed not only to hear my Judgment, but that of the holy Scriptures, from whence we draw all our Inſtruction, as out of a Fountain. Some imagine, that God cannot be ſeen, neither in this Life, nor in the Life to come. Their Reaſons are very ſtrong and weighty; for, *Firſt*, God is of an inviſible Nature. This Attribute is aſcribed to him by the ſacred Writers; as in the xith of the *Hebrews* the Apoſtle ſaith, that *Moſes*, by Faith, ſaw him who is inviſible. And, in the 1ſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, in the Firſt Chapter, he ſaith, *To the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever, Amen. Secondly*, We read in the xxxiiid of *Exodus*, when *Moſes* ſaid to God, *I pray thee let me ſee thy Glory*; God anſwered him, *Thou canſt not ſee my Face; for no Man ſhall ever ſee my Face and live. Thirdly*, St. *John*, in the Firſt Chapter of his Goſpel, ſpeaketh thus; *No Man hath ſeen God at any Time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the Boſom of the Father, he hath declared him. Laſtly*, St. *Paul* ſeems to remove all Doubts; for he ſaith, not only, *that God alone hath Immortality, that he dwells in a Light unto which no Man can approach, and that no Man hath ever ſeen him*; but he ſaith more, *that no Man can ſee him*, 1 Tim. vi.

Others are of a contrary Opinion, That God may be ſeen in this Life; but that in the Life to come he ſhall be ſeen more perfectly. That which encourageth this Opinion is, that God hath put into the Hearts of all his Children an earneſt Deſire of ſeeing his Face; and that in this Contemplation, they place their greateſt Happineſs and Glory. This was *David's* Deſire, a Man after God's own Heart, in the ivth *Pſalm, There may be that ſay, Who ſhall ſhew us any Good? Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon us.* And in Pſal. lxii. *My Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God: When ſhall I come and appear before God?* This is the Deſire alſo of the Prophet *Aſaph*, in the lxxxvth Pſalm, *God of Hoſts,*

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cauſe thy Face to ſhine, and we ſhall be ſaved. Secondly, We have heard *David* ſay, *I ſhall ſee thy Face in Righteouſneſs, I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake, with thy Likeneſs,* Pſal. xvii. And St. *Paul* promiſeth, that we ſhall ſee God Face to Face. And St. *John* aſſures us, *That we ſhall ſee God as he is. Thirdly,* In the xiith Chapter of *Numbers,* God ſpeaks in this Manner to *Aaron* and *Miriam,* who had murmured againſt their Brother *Moſes*; *If there be a Prophet amongſt you, I the Lord will make myſelf known unto him in a Viſion, and will ſpeak unto him in a Dream; my Servant* Moſes *is not ſo, who is faithful in all mine Houſe; with him will I ſpeak Mouth to Mouth, even apparently, and not in dark Speeches; and the Similitude of the Lord ſhall he behold.* Laſtly, We have heard the Voice from Heaven, that repreſents to us the bleſſed State of the Glorified, ſaying, *That they ſhall ſee the Face of God.*

If it were lawful for me to engage myſelf in ſuch an high Meditation, which is above the Capacity of Men and Angels, I ſhould declare to you in few Words, how it may be ſaid that we ſhall ſee God, and in what Manner it is impoſſible to behold him. But, firſt, we muſt take Notice of two or three Diſtinctions, which, being well underſtood, will remove the principal Difficulties in Queſtion.

Firſt, God may be conſidered in three ſeveral Reſpects; as he is in himſelf, and in his proper Being. It is in this Reſpect that our Souls earneſtly long for him, and deſire to draw near, and be united to him, as to their ſovereign Good, and the bottomleſs Fountain of Glory and Happineſs. *Secondly,* As he reveals and diſcovers himſelf on Earth, by certain Images and Tokens of his favourable Reception. *Thirdly,* As he ſhall manifeſt himſelf in Heaven by the glorious Images, and divine Marks of his Preſence.

Secondly, We muſt diſtinguiſh the ſeveral Kinds of Sight; for there is a Sight of the Body, which looks only upon the Objects, whereof the Images and Species are within the Reach and Capacity of our Eye-

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ſight, as are Colour and Light. There is the Sight of the Underſtanding, which ſees and beholds the Things that are at a Diſtance from our Senſes, as the ſpiritual and inviſible Subſtances, and the eſſential Forms of the Body. There is alſo the Sight of Faith, which riſeth yet ſomething higher than our Underſtandings, as it is during our Abode here below; when it is enlightened with God's divine Grace, it ſees and beholds Things which the Eye of the Body never ſaw, and the ſenſual Underſtandings of Men could never comprehend, as the Myſteries of the Chriſtian Religion, and the Powers of the World to come.

Laſtly, We muſt diſtinguiſh the Knowledge of the Underſtanding; for ſometimes it is obſcure and confuſed, at other Times it is clear and diſtinct. Moreover, that Knowledge which is the cleareſt and the moſt diſtinct is of two Sorts; the one hath Bounds and Limits ſuitable to its Subject, that is to ſay, ſuitable to the Ability and Reach of the Underſtanding; the other is abſolute, and of the ſame Extent as its Object, that is to ſay, as the Thing itſelf which the Underſtanding looks upon and beholds.

God, as he is in himſelf, and in his own Eſſence and Being, hath never been ſeen by the Eye of the Body, and ſhall never be, neither in this Life, nor in the Life to come; for God is a Spirit, and of an inviſible Nature, 1 *Tim.* vi. In this Reſpect St. *Paul* affirms, *That God dwells in a Light which no Man can approach unto; that no Man hath ever ſeen him, nor can ſee him*, John iii. But this good God, who of himſelf is inviſible, delights to ſhew himſelf to his Creatures in ſeveral Ways.

Firſt, God ſhews himſelf to all Men, in the Works of the Creation of the great World; for, as St. *Paul* ſaith in the firſt of the *Romans*, *The inviſible Things of God, from the Creation of the World, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead.* Particularly, he hath given the Light, which is as its eldeſt Daughter, and the firſt of all outward Productions, and Image and Reſemblance

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of him. For as there is nothing more ample, purer, and more beautiful, than the Light; so there is no visible Creature that represents so well this great God, who is a Being most pure, most beautiful and perfect, the Father of Lights, and the true Sun of Souls.

Secondly, God discovers himself by all the Workings of his wonderful Providence, and chiefly in his extraordinary and miraculous Operations. For when Men perceive Works which exceed all the ordinary Strength of Nature, they are forced to acknowledge, that they come immediately from an infinite Power. As *Pharaoh's* Magicians, when they found, that, by their magic Art, they were not able to counterfeit *Moses's* Miracle, confessed, *That it was the Finger of God.*

Thirdly, God discovers himself in his holy and divine Word, which is to us a perfect and divine Looking-glass, where we may see his Image, and Brightness of his Glory; that was St. *Paul's* Judgment, when he saith, *That all we that behold, as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord with open Face, are changed into the same Image from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Fourthly, God revealed himself to the Church of *Israel*, in the Ark, the Sign and ordinary Token of his gracious Presence. He spoke to his People from the Midst of the two golden Cherubims, and published his divine Oracles. There was he pleased to discover himself in divers Representations, chiefly in the Cloud and Fire which came down from Heaven. Therefore the Sign, bearing the Name of the Thing signified, is sometimes styled *the Lord*; as in that Passage, where *David* saith, *My Soul is a-thirst for God, for the mighty and living God*; *O when shall I go and appear in the Presence of God!* Psal. xlii.

Fifthly, God manifested himself to the Patriarchs and Prophets, in Dreams and Visions, by divine Raptures, and prophetical Elevations. In this Manner he appeared to the Patriarch *Jacob* in *Bethel*; for when it is said, that God was at the End of the mystical Ladder,

Ladder, which reached up to Heaven, without Doubt, he gave ſome Sign and Teſtimony there of his Preſence. And when the Prophet *Iſaiah* mentions his glorious Throne he makes no difficulty to ſay, *I ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple; above it ſtood the Seraphims, each one had ſix Wings, with two he covered his Face, and with two he covered his Feet, and with two he did fly; and one cried to another, and ſaid, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hoſts, and the whole Earth is full of his Glory; and the Poſts of the Door moved at the Voice of him that cried, and the Houſe was filled with Smoke,* Iſa. vi. And the Prophet *Micaiah,* when he ſpeaks of this Viſion he ſaith, *I have ſeen the Lord ſitting upon his Throne, and all the Hoſt of Heaven ſtanding at his Right-hand, and at his Left,* 1 Kings xxii. And the Prophet *Daniel* deſcribing one of his Viſions, ſpeaks in this Manner, *I beheld, till the Thrones were caſt down, and the Antient of Days did ſit, whoſe Garment was white as Snow, and the Hair of his head like the pure Wool; his Throne was like the fiery Flame, and his Wheels as burning Fire; a fiery Stream iſſued and came forth from before him; thouſand thouſands miniſtred unto him, and ten thouſand Times ten thouſand ſtood before him.*

Sixthly, God ſhewed himſelf to *Moſes* in a particular Manner, not only when he appeared to him in *Horeb,* and ſpoke to him out of the flaming Buſh, but eſpecially when God appeared to him in the Holy Mountain, and for the Space of forty Days and forty Nights diſcourſed with him familiarly, as with a Friend. For at that Time he ſet before him ſuch glorious and magnificent Tokens of his divine Preſence, that it was almoſt the ſame Thing as if he had ſeen God himſelf. God gave him more Light and Knowledge of his Glory than any other of his Prophets, and revealed himſelf to him in a more familiar Manner than to any other living Perſon. Becauſe of theſe glorious and extraordinary Appearances of God's Preſence and of the Brightneſs of his Light, which ſhined ſo clear in

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the Soul of *Moſes*, becauſe of that holy Familiarity which he had with God, that he ſpeaks of it in ſuch a manner, in the xiith Chapter of the Book of *Numbers*; for we cannot underſtand that Place in a literal Senſe, that *Moſes* did really ſee God himſelf; and that, with the Eyes of the Body, he beheld his Being, which is altogether inviſible. But we muſt thus underſtand it, that never any Man beheld ſuch glorious Expreſſions of the Godhead with the Eyes of the Body, that never any Man diſcourſed ſo familiarly with God, as *Moſes*; never any Man hath ever had ſo clear and plain a Knowledge of his great Glory, and divine Majeſty.

Seventhly, God had often appeared to Men in human Shapes, and hath given them ſuch viſible Expreſſions of his holy Preſence, that ſuch as have ſeen thoſe Images, tell us, that they have ſeen God. It is in this Manner that *Jacob* ſpeaks when he had wreſtled with an human Body, moved, not only by an aſſiſting Angel, but alſo by God himſelf, who diſcovers there his divine Virtue; *I have ſeen*, ſaith he, *God Face to Face, and my Soul hath been ſaved*, Gen. xxxii. *Manoah*, the Father of *Samſon*, tells as much, when he had ſeen the human Shape in which God was pleaſed to appear, when he aſcended up into Heaven in the Flames of his Sacrifice, *For certain we ſhall die*; *for we have ſeen God*, Judg. xiii. In like Manner, when God appeared to *Abraham* in the Shape of a Man, this Man is called the Lord, and *Abraham* bowed himſelf before him, and worſhipped. And at another Time this holy Patriarch ſaw no leſs than three human Shapes which appeared to him at once. Some think that God was viſible but in one of theſe Shapes and the two others were Angels. That which confirms this Opinion is, that of theſe three Perſons, there is but one that ſpeaks as God, and receives *Abraham's* Adoration, and then he appears no more; the two others are ſtiled Angels, in the Beginning of the xixth Chapter. But others believe with ſome ancient Doctors of

of the Church, that theſe three human Shapes were a true Image, and living Repreſentation, of the moſt holy, moſt glorious, aod moſt wonderful Trinity. In this Opinion there is nothing contrary to the Analogy of Faith.

Finally, God hath diſcovered himſelf by his Son in a particular Manner; he is named therefore *The Image of God, the Image of the inviſible God, and God manifeſt in the Fleſh.* God hath not only imprinted in him ſome Tokens of his Godhead, and marks of his Divine Power; he hath cauſed him not to walk and move as the borrowed Bodies of the *Old Teſtament:* He hath not only engraven in him the perfect Image of all his Divine Perfections; God is not in him in a Shadow, or a Figure, as he was in the Ark, and in *Solomon's* Temple, but he hath dwelt in him bodily, and by his eternal Godhead, as St. *Paul* informs us, *That in him dwelleth bodily,* that is to ſay, really and eſſentially, *all the Fullneſs of the Godhead*; therefore our Saviour tells St. *Philip, That he that hath ſeen him hath ſeen the Father,* John xiv.

This being granted, let us now conſider how we ſee God now here below, and how we ſhall ſee him hereafter in Heaven. At preſent we ſee him with the Eyes of the Body in his viſible Works; and we ſee his Being alſo with the Eye of our Underſtanding, but in a weak and imperfect Manner; we know him with a very obſcure and clouded Knowledge. For this Cauſe St. *Paul* ſaith very well and truly, *That we know him in part, and we propheſy in part.* We ſee God alſo with the Eye of Faith; it is with this Eye that we ſee him, as *Moſes* did, who is inviſible, and that we behold our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſitting at the Right-hand of God the Father, above all the Principalities and Powers, worſhipped and adored by all the glorified Church in Heaven. In Paradiſe we hope to ſee with the Eyes of our glorified Body, the Images and Marks of the Divinity, ſo glorious and magnificent, ſo beautiful and full of Majeſty, that, in

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Compariſon of that, whatſoever appeared to the Prophets and Patriarchs, in their illuſtrious Viſions, was nothing but Obſcurity and Darkneſs. And with the ſame Eyes of the Body we ſhall ſee God in the Perſon of our Saviour who is the Brightneſs of his Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon; ſo that we may well ſay with *Job* in a full Aſſurance of Faith, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the laſt Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin Worms deſtroy this Body, I ſhall ſee God in my Fleſh, whom I ſhall ſee for myſelf, and my Eyes ſhall behold, and not another*, Job xix. But for the Eſſence of God, and for the eternal Godhead, we ſhall not, nor can we, ſee it with the Eyes of the Body, let them become never ſo glorious, incorruptible, and immortal: Neither ſhall we ſee it with the Eye of Faith; for then Faith ſhall be totally aboliſhed, and we ſhall not walk any more by Faith, but by Sight: But we ſhall ſee God with the Eye of the Underſtanding, enlightened with a Divine Glory. Now, as we have taken Notice, there are two Sorts of Contemplation and Knowledge; the one perfect, proportioned to the Object, which we behold, and look upon; the other imperfect, ſuitable to the Subject that looks and ſees. Our future Knowledge of God, ſhall not be of the firſt, but of the latter Sort; that is to ſay, that we ſhall never ſee into the Bottom of the Myſteries of God's divine Majeſty, and of his Glory. We ſhall never know perfectly this higheſt Perfection, this infinite Being, this incomprehenſible and glorious Godhead. For things are in their Action as they are in their Beings and in their Abilities: Now, in the moſt glorious State of Heaven, our Beings and Abilities ſhall be limited and circumſcribed. Therefore it ſhall be abſolutely impoſſible for us to comprehend perfectly the Being of God, which is infinite in itſelf, and in all its wonderful Perfections. The holy Angels themſelves, the Cherubims and Seraphims, theſe Creatures of Light and Glory, are not able to pry into theſe bottomleſs Depths, they

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are not able to approach this infinite Light. In a Word, it belongs only to God himſelf, to comprehend and underſtand perfectly the infinite Glory, and higheſt Perfections of the Godhead.

Although our Sight ſhall not be able to ſearch into the Bottom of theſe Depths of the Divinity, though we ſhall never be able to comprehend perfectly the infinite Being of God; nevertheleſs, we hope to behold openly this wonderful Object, and to obtain as much Knowledge of it as ſhall be requiſite to render us perfectly happy. For as when our Eye beholds the Noon-ſun, it cannot ſtedfaſtly look upon it, nor receive all its Beams, but it partakes of as much as is neceſſary to enlighten it; and when there ſhall be a thouſand Suns, our Eyes would never make uſe of more Light than they do at preſent: Likewiſe, in beholding the Father of Lights, this beautiful Sun of our Souls, it is altogether impoſſible to admit the Immenſity of its Beams; but we ſhall partake of as much as ſhall be neceſſary to drive away all our Darkneſs, and to fill us full of perfect Light, to make us become Light in the Lord, and to cauſe us to ſhine for ever, as ſo many Stars and little Suns. As an empty Veſſel, when it is caſt into the Sea, comprehends not all its Waters, but it receives only enough to fill it up, ſo that there is no Part empty; thus, when we ſhall be caſt into the Ocean of the Godhead, we ſhall not be able to comprehend and receive God's infinite Glory and Happineſs; but we ſhall receive and comprehend as much as ſhall content all our Deſires, and ſatisfy all our craving Appetites. So that there ſhall be nothing at all wanting in us, which might be expected in the higheſt Felicity of an human Creature.

I do not ſay, in the higheſt Felicity, abſolutely without Limitation: For there are two Sorts of Felicities; the one abſolutely perfect, beyond which there can be nothing expected. This Felicity or Happineſs is only to be found in God. The other is perfect, in a certain Degree. As the perfect Hap-

pineſs of the Angels is to attain to that Degree of Glory, of which the angelical Nature is capable; likewiſe the perfect Happineſs of Man is to enjoy all that Bleſſedneſs, which the human Nature alone and ſingle is able to enjoy: I muſt ſay the ſingle Nature of Man, to diſtinguiſh it from that which is united to the Perſon of the eternal Son of God. For by this Union, this hath attained to an incommunicable Glory, of which other Creatures cannot partake in the ſame Perfection; it hath attained to an Happineſs far above the Glory of all the Children of God, and of all the holy Angels of Heaven, far above what they can or may expect.

Again, I may ſay, that there is a ſupreme and perfect Happineſs, independent, which ſubſiſts of itſelf, without any foreign Aſſiſtance. This Kind of Happineſs is only to be found in God: For, as he is of himſelf an infinite Being, he borrows nothing from others, and of himſelf is abſolutely and perfectly happy. The other Happineſs is, that which proceeds not out of ourſelves, but is derived to us from another; ſuch is the Glory and Happineſs of the Angels. This Leſſon the Holy Ghoſt teacheth us in theſe Words, *God puts Light into his Angels*, that is to ſay, that theſe holy Spirits have nothing of Light or Glory in them, but what is derived to them from the Father of Lights, and his gracious Aſpect. Such alſo is the Glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as Mediator. Therefore he ſpeaks thus to God his Father, *Glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee*, John xvii. In a Word, ſuch ſhall be our Glory and Happineſs; for as we have our Being from God, it is from him that we derive our Well-being; alſo it is from him only that we can expect all our Glory and Bliſs.

From hence you may eaſily underſtand, that God is the only Object, and the only Source of our eternal Glory, and future Happineſs. If you enquire from me, What ſhall be the eſſential Form? I anſwer, That it ſhall be our Likeneſs and Reſemblance with

with God; which ſhall be as perfect as an human Creature is capable of. Now this Reſemblance and Similitude ſhall conſiſt in three Things; in a pure and bright Light, which ſhall not be mixed with the leaſt Obſcurity; in a perfect and complete Holineſs, where there ſhall not be the leaſt Blemiſh; and in an infinite and unalterable Joy and Content, where there ſhall never be the leaſt Cloud of Grief: But of this we have ſufficiently treated already.

Some there are that enquire whether in Paradiſe there ſhall be an Equality, or an Inequality, in Glories and Happineſſes. This Queſtion is more curious than neceſſary. For we need not enquire whether there ſhall be any more or leſs happy than ourſelves. It ſhould ſuffice us for our Comfort, to know, that if we be true Believers, and truly penitent; if we fear God as we ought, if we ſerve him with a religious Mind until the laſt Gaſp; that in ſuch a Caſe we ſhall attain to the Glory of the Children of God, and poſſeſs them with a perfect and eternal Happineſs. Nevertheleſs, that we may ſeem to omit nothing which might give Satisfaction to every believing Soul, I ſhall examine this Particular; but it ſhall be without advancing any new Thing, which I have not ſeen in the Goſpel, nor learned from the true Doctor of our Souls. I ſhall declare the Opinion of the moſt learned upon this rich and excellent Subject. Afterwards I ſhall add my own, which I ſubmit, as the reſt of this Treatiſe, to the Judgement of the wiſer and more learned Perſons, who are bettter acquainted than I am with the ſpiritual and heavenly Enjoyments.

Some believe, that in Paradiſe there ſhall be every where the ſame Glory and Happineſs, equal and uniform in every Perſon that ſhall enjoy it. Their principal Reaſons are, *Firſt*, That we can have no Glory nor Happineſs, but that which hath been purchaſed for us by the Death and Paſſion of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and that as this glorious Saviour hath purchaſed this Glory and Happineſs for all the Elect

equally, they ſhall all enjoy it in the higheſt Degree and Perfection. *Secondly*, That the Holineſs of all the Bleſſed ſhall be perfect; therefore, as they ſhall be all perfectly holy, they ſhall be all likewiſe perfectly happy in the ſame Degree. *Thirdly*, That our Saviour ſaith expreſly, without any Exception, *That the Saints ſhall ſhine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, Matth. xxiii. Now the Sun is the King of the Stars, and the brighteſt of all the heavenly Bodies. *Fourthly*, That the Elect are repreſented in Heaven as ſo many Kings, having upon their Heads Crowns of Gold, *Rev.* i. 4, 5. Now there is no Inequality between Kings; for each of them is in Poſſeſſion of Sovereignty, and an independent and ſupreme Authority. *Fifthly*, That Jeſus Chriſt repreſents to us the laſt Tranſactions of the World, by the Parable of a Father of a Family, who at the End of the Day beſtows the ſame Salary upon every one that hath laboured in his Vineyard, *Matth.* xx. *Sixthly*, That it is ſaid in general Terms, *That we ſhall ſee God Face to Face; and that we ſhall ſee him as he is*, 1 Cor. xiii. 1 John iii. And that in this bleſſed Viſion ſhall conſiſt the chief Happineſs of Man. *Laſtly*, That after the Reſurrection, *God ſhall be unto us All in all*; which Expreſſion declares the higheſt and moſt complete Happineſs and Glory.

Others think the contrary, that in Heaven there ſhall be an Inequality of Glory, and ſeveral Degrees of Happineſs. This their Opinion they ſtrengthen chiefly with two Paſſages of holy Scripture; the one in *John* xiv. where Chriſt ſaith to his Apoſtles, *In my Father's Houſe there are many Manſions.* The other is in 1 *Cor.* xv. where St. *Paul* diſcourſing at large of the Happineſs of the Saints after the Reſurrection, ſaith, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory; ſo alſo is the Reſurrection of the Dead.*

There are ſome that are not content to believe an Inequality of Glory and Happineſs, but undertake farther

farther to diſcourſe of this Matter, with as much Confidence, as if God had admitted them to the Knowledge of his eternal Secrets, as if he had diſcovered to them all the Wonders of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, more plainly than to his beloved Diſciple. They tell us, that there ſhall be not only divers Degrees of Glory and Happineſs; but they affirm, who they are that ſhall obtain ſuch and ſuch Degrees. They determine abſolutely, and preſcribe what Glory ſhall belong to Virgins, what ſhall be that of Confeſſors, and what ſhall be that of Martyrs. In a Word, ſome are ſo puffed up with an high Conceit of themſelves, and of their meritorious Acts, that they make an open Profeſſion of being of the Number of ſuch as ſhall obtain the higheſt Degrees of Glory and Happineſs.

But my Opinion is, that the Truth is to be found between theſe two Extremes. I ſhall not preſcribe a Law to the Conſciences of any, in a Matter whereof the Deciſion is not abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation: Yet we may ſay, that in Heaven there ſhall be divers Degrees of Glory and Happineſs; but we dare not deſcribe them, nor venture to apply them to any Perſon, or to tell who of us ſhall poſſeſs ſuch and ſuch Degrees. This were a bold Preſumption againſt Heaven, and an Attempt upon the forbidden Fruit. Inſtead of being ſerviceable to others, we ſhould wilfully loſe ourſelves: For ſuch as are ſo audacious to ſearch into the divine Majeſty, ſhall be ſwallowed up in his Glory, *Prov.* xxv.

And though we verily believe Degrees of Glory, yet we may ſay, without Offence to any Perſon, that this Belief is not to be eſtabliſhed upon the forementioned Paſſages, from whence we cannot make any ſuch Concluſion; for in St *John* xiv. our Saviour ſaith not, that there are divers Degrees of divine Manſions, whereof ſome are richer and more glorious than others; but only that in his Father's Houſe there are many Manſions. The Meaning of our divine Saviour is clear as the Day; he had an Intent to raiſe up the

drooping Courage of his holy Apostles, and to comfort them in his Absence; for that Purpose he assures them, that he was going to lodge in an House, where there was not only Room for himself but also for them, and for all that shall believe in him, through their Teaching. He expounds his Words plainly in the xviith Chapter of the same Gospel, where he speaks to God in this Manner, *I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory, which thou hast given me.* For the other Text in 1 *Cor.* I beseech you, devout Souls, read over the Apostle's Words; and consider with a religious Observation, what goes before, and what follows after. You shall find, that the Apostle designs not to compare the Saints the one with the other, but only to discover the Difference which is between our Bodies as they are in this corruptible and mortal Life, and as they shall be when they shall have put on Incorruption and Immortality. Therefore, when he hath said, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, another of the Stars, for one Star, differeth from another Star in Glory*; he doth not add likewise, So shall be the Glory of one blessed Person differing from another; but he saith, *So shall be the Resurrection from the Dead; the Body is sown in Corruption, it shall be raised in Incorruption; it is sown in Dishonour, it is raised in Glory; it is sown in Weakness, it is raised in Power; it is sown a natural Body, it is raised a spiritual Body.*.

What is it therefore that may incline us to believe these divers Degrees of Glory and Happiness? I answer, *First*, The divers and different Pains and Punishments of the Damned. For as in Hell there shall be divers Degrees of Torments; likewise it is very pobable, that in Heaven there shall be divers Degrees of Happiness, and several Degrees of Glory. *Secondly*, God, to declare his divine Wisdom, which is various in all Things, bestows, at present, all his Blessings and Riches with a wonderful Variety, and admirable Order. Thus you may

see

ſee in Nature, that God hath ſcattered up and down the World divers Gifts and Excellencies: For Example, the Smell and Beauty of the Roſe is different from that of the Lily; the Brightneſs of the Diamond is not like that of the Ruby; the Light of the Sun differs from that of the Moon and Stars. It is very probable, that above all the Heavens, there ſhall be divers Degrees of Light and Glory. Among the holy Angels, there are Diſtinctions of Honour, and ſome Dignities are named, *Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, and Powers.* As therefore amongſt the Angels there are divers Degrees of Glory, it is alſo very probable, that the ſame Order ſhall be obſerved amongſt the Glorified in Heaven. Beſides, as in the Church militant the Graces of God differ very much; ſo the Souls of the Faithful are not the ſame in all Reſpects, they have different Qualities and Excellencies; there are in them divers Degrees of Light, of Knowledge, of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Holineſs: Likewiſe, according to the Analogy of Faith, there ſhall be alſo, in the Church glorified, divers Degrees of Glory and Happineſs; and the rather, becauſe Glory is nothing elſe but the Completion and Perfection of Grace. This Reaſon is ſo much the ſtronger, becauſe of the *Parable of the Talents.* Jeſus Chriſt beſtows upon his Servants a Glory proportionble to the former Riches of his Grace. None can imagine, that the Words relate to God's Favours diſtributed to his Children on Earth; for our Lord ſpeaks of that which he intends to do for them, when he ſhall come down from Heaven to judge the World. The Words relate to the Time when he ſhall ſay to ſuch as have well employed the Talents of his Mercy, *Well done, good and faithful Servant; enter into the Joy of thy Lord.* They relate alſo to the Time when he ſhall cauſe the unprofitable Servant *to be caſt into utter Darkneſs where there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.* I ought not to forget what we read on this

Subject, 2 *Cor.* ix. *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully.* They are St. *Paul's* Words, which expressly declare an Inequality of Glory and Happiness to be expected amongst the Rewards in Heaven. It may be also worthy of our Observation, that the Felicities of Heaven are represented to us by a Feast, where all partake of the same Meats, but some are advanced to a more honourable Room than others. This, as I conceive, may be gathered from our Saviour's Words, *Many shall come from the East, and from the West; and shall sit at Table in the Kingdom of Heaven, with* Abraham, Isaac, *and* Jacob. It may also be understood from that other Passage, where *Lazarus* is carried by the holy Angels into *Abraham's* Bosom. *Lastly*, I ground my Opinion upon the xiith Chapter of *Daniel*, where this blessed Prophet, when he had spoken in general Terms of the future Happiness of the Faithful, who shall rise to eternal Life, he offers to mention some, on whom God hath bestowed more Light upon Earth, and whose Ministry he hath made use of, to bring many Souls to Salvation; among these he seems to put divers Degrees of Glory; *They that are wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that bring many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever.* From this Text one may apparently conclude, that as the Light of the Firmament differs much from that of the bright Stars, and as among the Stars there is a Diversity of Light; in like Manner there shall be divers and different Degrees of Glory amongst the blessed in Heaven.

Now, in Answer to that Argument, That Jesus Christ hath purchased for us the Glory and Happiness of Heaven, that therefore this Glory and Happiness should be equal, I confess this Reason is weighty. I intend not absolutely to deny it; but I shall offer several Things to the Consideration of the pious and devout Souls, who shall peruse this Treatise. *First*, That although the Blood of Jesus Christ hath purchased

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for us Heaven; and that we are not able to claim it by our moſt regenerate Action, or merit it by our moſt painful Sufferings and Martyrdom; becauſe that when we have performed all that is commanded, our Saviour requires us to ſay, *We are unprofitable Servants becauſe we have done nothing but what we are bound to do*, Luke xvii. and becauſe his holy Apoſtle aſſures us, that *when all Things are reckoned up, the Sufferings of this preſent Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed to us*, Rom. viii. nevertheleſs, God is ſo good, merciful, and bountiful, that he bears with our Imperfections, and he rewards as a Father, with a free Reward, all the good Works of his Servants, chiefly the Works of Charity. Therefore Jeſus Chriſt tells his Apoſtles, and generally all the Faithful, *Whoſoever ſhall give unto you to drink a Cup of Water, becauſe you are Chriſt's, verily, I ſay unto you, he ſhall not loſe his Reward.* And becauſe it is the Cuſtom of the Eaſtern People to warm their Drink, therefore to give a Cup of cold Water may be reckoned the ſmalleſt Aſſiſtance, our Saviour ſaith, *Whoſoever ſhall give unto one of theſe little Ones to drink a Cup of cold Water only, in the Name of a Diſciple, verily, I ſay unto you, he ſhall not loſe his Reward*, Matth. x. If ſuch as beſtow a Cup of cold Water for God's Sake, are rewarded in Heaven, what may not thoſe bountiful Souls expect there, who now ſpend their Eſtates in charitable Deeds? Beſides we have heard a Prophet tell us, that all ſuch as by the Light of their Doctrines, and the Holineſs of their Lives, lead many Souls to their Salvation, ſhall ſhine for ever in Heaven, as ſo many bright Stars. It ſtands with Reaſon; for if our Saviour will in his infinite Mercy reward ſuch a ſmall Kindneſs as the Gift of a Draught of Water to one of his Children, they ſhall excel in Glory, who ſpend for his Sake, in his Quarrel, every Drop of their Blood, and by their Deaths, confirm his holy Goſpel. *This is a faithful Saying, If we die with Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall*

alſo

also live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. But that which seems to me yet stronger, which makes for this Purpose, is, that all these spiritual Graces which are bestowed upon us in this Life, proceed from the Holy Ghost, purchased for us by the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his precious Blood. Now these Graces are different and various. Therefore as there are divers Degrees in Grace, why should not there be also divers Degrees of Glory, since both have been purchased for us with the same Price, by the Death and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ?

The other Argument drawn from the Happiness and Perfection of the Glorified, is rational, but not infallible. For several Diamonds may be perfect in their Kind, so that the cleareſt Eye cannot take Notice of any Default; nevertheless they may differ in Weight and Price. All the Stars have their Perfection and Light; nevertheless one Star differs from another Star in Glory. All the Angels of Heaven are perfectly happy and holy; and yet there is a great Inequality amongst them in Glory and Dignity. Likewise, although all the Blessed shall attain to a perfect Holiness, in my Judgment, that cannot hinder the Diversity of Degrees of Glory and Happiness.

I acknowledge also that the other Objection, drawn from these Words *The Just shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, is not to be despised, but it concludes nothing to the Purpose. For if you should cut out excellently well some Orbs of Crystal, of different Sizes, some greater, some less, and should put them all in the Sun; they would be all full of Light in every Part, every one of them would represent the beautiful Image of that Sun that looks upon them; so that it may very well be said of them all, that they shine as the Sun. Nevertheless, according to their Brightness and Size, they receive more Light, and the Sun seems greater in the one than the other. To the other Objection, That all the Glorified in Heaven are named Kings; I answer, that this is not to be understood in a literal

a literal Senſe, no more than when it is ſaid, That they had on their Heads Crowns of Gold. That I may continue in the ſame Compariſon, I may ſay, That all Kings have a ſovereign Majeſty, which acknowledges none above it, but God, from whom it proceeds; and nevertheleſs ſome have a greater Power and Riches than others: Likewiſe all the glorified Saints ſhall enjoy a ſovereign and perfect Happineſs, and receive it immediately from God; but this cannot hinder them from differing from one another in Glory. I anſwer next, the other Argument, taken out of the Parable of the Father of the Family, who at the Evening of the Day rewarded equally all his Labourers, that had been employed in his Vineyard, giving to every one of them a Penny: That Parables are as Pictures, in which, beſides the Thing intended to be drawn, there are many Particulars, which ſerve but as Flouriſhes to adorn the Pieces. If we ſhould conſider every Particular of this Parable, we might conclude from hence, that, amongſt ſuch as ſhall be ſaved, there ſhall be ſome murmuring againſt God, who ſhall envy their Companions; which is a groſs Abſurdity to imagine. The Deſign of our Saviour is not to ſpeak of the Equality of the glorified Saints; but his Intent is to ſhew, that thoſe whom God calls firſt, ſhould not deſpiſe the others; becauſe God, who doth with his own what he pleaſeth, is able to make them equal, and to beſtow upon them the ſame Advantages. Laſtly, as every one whom the good Man of the Houſe ſent into his Vineyard at ſeveral Times of the Day, received for their Salary a Penny; in the ſame Manner, whoſoever God calls into his Church effectually at any Time, nay, at the Hour of Death, they ſhall receive from his infinite Bounty eternal Life; but from hence we cannot conclude any Thing contrary to this Truth, that in Heaven there ſhall be divers Degrees of Glory.

The greateſt Difficulty, in my Judgement, is in this Allegation, *That we ſhall ſee God Face to Face; and that he will be All in all*, 1 Cor. xiii. 1 Cor. xv. Nevertheleſs

leſs we may ſay, that as all the Damned in Hell ſhall loſe all Sight of God, yet that cannot hinder the divers Degrees of Pain and Torment; likewiſe, all the glorified in Heaven ſhall ſee God; but this Sight, which all enjoy, cannot remove the Inequality of their Glory and Happineſs. As when all Men look upon the ſame Sun, but ſeveral receive the Benefit of its Beams in a different Manner; thus we ſhall all behold the ſame God; but the gracious Aſpect of his Countenance ſhall be caſt upon us variouſly, and produce in us divers Effects. We may alſo make uſe of another Compariſon: As when we caſt many empty Veſſels into the ſame Sea, they are filled up; ſo that it may be ſaid of them, that the Sea is in them all; yet ſome may be more capacious, and receive more Water than others; likewiſe all the Saints ſhall enter into the ſame wonderful Ocean of the Godhead, and they ſhall be all filled up to the Brim with his glorious Preſence; ſo that God ſhall be *All in all:* Nevertheleſs, we ſhall receive different Meaſures of the Waters iſſuing forth to eternal Life. In a Word, as God will caſt headlong all the Reprobates into the ſame Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, yet there ſhall be divers Degrees amongſt them of Puniſhments; ſo God ſhall cauſe all the Elect to drink out of the ſame River of Pleaſure; but there ſhall be a Difference amongſt their Degrees of Glory. Moreover, this Paſſage may be thus underſtood: *God ſhall be All in all*; that is to ſay, he ſhall be to us all Riches, Glory, Light, Meat, Drink, Pleaſure, *&c.* In my Judgement, we cannot conclude from hence, that he is to be in all equally.

If any have other Thoughts, or is of another Opinion, I ſhall not offer to condemn him, nor undertake to contradict him: For I conceive, that ſince Almighty God hath hid the Glories and Happineſs of Heaven, and covered them over with a thick Cloud, on purpoſe to limit our too curious Enquiry, we cannot mention them with too much Modeſty and Reſpect. Only I muſt make another Remark for the

Comfort

Comfort of devout Souls, whoſe Thoughts and Minds are in Heaven; that when we affirm, that there ſhall be different Degrees of Glory in Paradiſe, we muſt not fancy that this ſhall be any Prejudice to the perfect Happineſs of the Glorified. For if I may once again make uſe of the Compariſon of the Sun-beams, and of the Waters of the Sea, I cannot find any more proper for the Purpoſe. As all Eyes that look upon the clear Sun, without Cloud or Miſt, receive its Rays in a different Manner; yet they have all Light enough to ſee to guide themſelves, and to rejoice in this beautiful Light that enlightens them; if ſome take in a greater Meaſure of that Light, this hinders not the reſt from enjoying alſo a Sufficiency: So ſhall it be with all the glorified Souls, when they ſhall behold God the Father of Lights, the true Sun that ſhall ſhine for ever and ever: If any of them ſhall have more or leſs of Light, that ſhall not concern or prejudice their ſovereign Happineſs, for every one of them ſhall enjoy as much as they ſhall be able to contain, or ſhall be neceſſary to complete their Joy, and perfect their Happineſs. And as when we caſt into the Sea many empty Veſſels, ſome greater, ſome leſs, the greater contains more Water, and the leſſer not ſo much; yet they all receive enough to be filled up to the Brim: If the leaſt of theſe Veſſels had the Knowledge to ſpeak, they would not complain of the greater, for containing more than they, becauſe they have all as much as they can either deſire or expect; likewiſe when the Saints ſhall be admitted into the bottomleſs Sea of Glory and Happineſs they ſhall be filled all up to the Brim, ſo that they ſhall not be able to deſire any more. They ſhall be all, according to their different Capacities, perfectly and entirely happy. Conſider therefore, Chriſtian Soul, that if thou enjoyeſt ſo much Satisfaction and Delight as thou art capable of, altho' others may have ſomething more, thou art no leſs happy for their Overplus. There is none but God alone, who, according to the Infiniteneſs of his Being,

ing, poſſeſſeth an unmeaſurable and infinite Glory and Happineſs. This bottomleſs Source of Glory and Bliſs ſhall for ever and ever overflow all the Glorified in Heaven, and ſatisfy their Souls with unſpeakable Delights.

You may aſk, *Chriſtians*, In what Part of the great World ſhall God cauſe us to enjoy ſo many rare Pleaſures, and heavenly Contentments? Where ſhall he diſcover ſo much Glory and Splendour? In what Part doth he intend to ſhew ſo many divine Marks of his gracious Preſence? I anſwer, That this Place is above the elemental World, above all the Heavens, that appear before our Eyes, and that roll about us. If we will underſtand this, we muſt remember that the Holy Scripture makes mention of three Heavens: The firſt is the large Extent of the Air, diſtinguiſhed by the learned into three Regions. In this Senſe it is to be underſtood when it ſpeaks of the Birds of the Air. The ſecond Heaven comprehends the heavenly Spheres, the Globes that are between the Moon and the Firmament, where are all the fixed Stars; and if beyond this there be any other Sphere, whereof the Motion is ſo powerful and ſwift as to carry with it the inferior Globes, and to cauſe them to roll round in the Space of four-and-twenty Hours. Of this Heaven *David* ſpeaks in *Pſal.* xix. *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his Handy-work; he hath put in them a Tabernacle for the Sun.* Now, above all theſe heavenly Spheres mentioned by the Aſtronomers (ſome reckon up nine or ten, others more;) there is yet a third Heaven ſpoken of by St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. xii. *I know*, ſaith he, *a Man in Chriſt, which was taken up into the third Heaven; I know that he was taken up into Paradiſe, and heard Words which cannot be ſpoken, which are not poſſible for Man to utter.* The holy Apoſtle leaves no Manner of Difficulty; for the third Heaven he names Paradiſe, where he heard unſpeakable Words, which are not poſſible to be uttered.

The celeſtial Globes roll about continually; but this third Heaven, for its Excellency, is ſtiled, *the Heaven*; and is fixed in an eternal Settlement. And as much as theſe beautiful Orbs have a greater Light and Glory than the Air, and the inferior Bodies; ſo much the more doth this third Heaven excel them. It is my Judgment that *Solomon* means this third Heaven ſituate above all the reſt, which exceeds them ſo much in Beauty and Glory, when he ſpeaks to God *of the Heavens, and of the Heaven of Heavens*, 1 Kings viii. That is to ſay, the moſt excellent, the higheſt, and the moſt glorious of all the Heavens, *are not able to contain thee*; and God himſelf declares by his holy Prophets, *the Heavens are my Throne, and the Earth is my Footſtool*, Iſaiah lxvi. For in this high Heaven God hath placed his Throne, where he diſcovers his Glory, and the Brightneſs of his luminous Countenance. There the Seraphims fly, and thouſand thouſands worſhip him, and ten thouſand Millions ſtand continually before him, *Iſaiah* vi. *Dan.* vii. Here the bleſſed Soul of our Saviour Chriſt aſcended as ſoon as it had left the Body, according to what he promiſed the crucified Thief, *Verily, I ſay unto thee, This Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*, Luke xxiii. Into this Place our glorious Saviour entered, both in Soul and Body, after his Reſurrection; and here it was that St. *Stephen* ſaw him, when he cried out, *I ſee the Heavens open, and Jeſus Chriſt ſitting at the Right-hand of God*, Acts vii. And to this Place the Souls of all ſuch as die in his Favour are carried up. Therefore St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews* mentions, immediately after the thouſands of Angels, *the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect; and the Church and Congregation of the Firſt-born, whoſe Names are written in Heaven.* In ſhort, it is the glorious Seat, where we hope that God will receive us both in Soul and Body, at that Day when we ſhall be taken up into the Air, above the Clouds of Heaven, to be for ever with the Lord Jeſus.

Some enquire, What ſhall become then of this elemental World? Whether this Heaven that appears

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to our Eyes, and this Earth that ſuſtains us, ſhall periſh? Or whether they ſhall remain yet after the great Day of Doom?

Certain profane Atheiſts are perſuaded, that the World ſhall remain for ever, as it doth at preſent, and that there ſhall be no Kind of Alteration. The Apoſtle St. *Peter* hath propheſied of theſe Perſons, and deſcribed them in their own Colours; *There ſhall come at the laſt Day Mockers, walking after their own Luſts, ſaying, Where is the Promiſe of his Coming? For ſince the Fathers are aſleep, all Things continue in the ſame Manner, ſince the Beginning of the World.* I need not trouble myſelf to anſwer ſuch Impieties: I ſpeak to none but to devout Souls, who reverence the Divinity of the holy Scriptures, and are fully perſuaded of the Truth of all the Articles of our Creed.

When Men oppoſe a falſe Doctrine, they often run from one Extremity to another. Therefore ſome imagine, that the World ſhall totally periſh; and that as God hath made the Heavens and Earth, and the reſt of the Elements out of nothing, he will reduce them all again into the ſame nothing; and that he intends to create others, more beautiful, more holy, and far more glorious. There are two ſorts of Expreſſions that ſeem to favour this Opinion. The firſt ſpeaks of the Heavens and of the Earth, as of periſhing and decaying Creatures. In this Manner *David* diſcourſeth of them in *Pſal.* cii. after him the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, *Thou, Lord, haſt eſtabliſhed the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thy Hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; they ſhall wax old as doth a Garment; and as a Veſture ſhalt thou fold them up, and they ſhall be changed.* And our Saviour tells us in *Matth.* xxiv. *The Heavens and the Earth ſhall paſs away, but my Word ſhall not paſs away.* Eſpecially the Words of St. *Peter*, in the 2d Epiſtle, and in the iiid Chapter, are remarkable, *The Heavens ſhall paſs away with a Noiſe; and the Elements ſhall melt with Heat; and the Earth, with the Works that are within, ſhall be burnt up*

up. The other Paſſages mention new Heavens, and a new Earth, as in *Iſa.* lxv. *Behold, I create new Heavens, and a new Earth; and the former Things ſhall be remembered no more.* Likewiſe, in 2 *Pet.* iii. beforementioned, *We look for new Heavens and a new Earth, according to his Promiſe, wherein dwelleth Righteouſneſs.* And *Rev.* xxi. *I ſaw a new Heaven, and a new Earth; for the firſt Heaven and the firſt Earth were paſſed away; and there was no more Sea.* Moreover St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks of the *World to come.* From hence ſome conclude, that the old World ought to be aboliſhed, and that God will create a new World.

There is no Man, that is a Chriſtian, can doubt of that wonderful Change which ſhall happen to the World at the laſt Day, if he conſiders the fore-mentioned Paſſages of holy Scripture; eſpecially that of St. *Peter, The Heavens ſhall paſs away with a Noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with Heat; and the Earth, with the Works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up.* As the Walls of *Jericho* fell at the Sound of the Prieſts Trumpets; ſo this great World ſhall be turned upſide down at the Blowing of the Archangel's Trumpet. Our Reaſon alone, being enlightened by divine Revelations, ſeems to confirm this Truth; for ſince the Houſe infected with a ſpreading Leproſy was to be demoliſhed, how much rather ought the World to be deſtroyed becauſe in it are to be ſeen apparently the Spots and Blemiſhes of Sin, the ſpiritual Leproſy!

But though this great Fabrick of the World muſt be ruined, and turned upſide down, we do not believe that it ſhall be reduced to nothing. Its Qualities ſhall be changed, and it may be, its Form ſhall be altered; but its Subſtance and Matter ſhall continue always the ſame. For, *firſt*, as God hath created the World for his own Glory, he cannot be for ever diſappointed of the Intent of his Creation. And becauſe this World hath not glorified him as it

ought, he will put it into a Condition proper to glorify him anſwerable to the Purpoſe, for which he drew it out of nothing. *Secondly*, Since this World was created to ſerve Man, as a Looking-glaſs, to behold the eternal Power of God; and that this beautiful Looking-glaſs hath been ſpotted and ſullied by Sin; it is yet poſſible to cleanſe it, and make it brighter, that it might repreſent its Creator better, and ſhew forth a more perfect Image of his Divine Majeſty. *Thirdly*, Since God doth nothing in vain, there is no Likelihood that he ſhould deſtroy the World totally, and reduce the primitive Matter to nothing, from whence it was drawn, to create new Matter, becauſe he is able of this old Matter to make a new Earth, and new Heaven, as pure and undefiled as if the Matter had been newly created. *Fourthly*, Sin hath ſpoiled and disfigured the Works of the Creation; but it hath not touched either the firſt Matter, or its Being; ſo that God can take away this Defilement, and remove this Deformity, without touching the Matter, which of itſelf is innocent. In Man, the little World, and the Compendium of the great, I find a beautiful and perfect Image of that which God will do with the whole World. God intends not to deſtroy the Subſtance of Souls, but only to purge them from all vicious Qualities, and beautify them with Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs; ſo that they ſhall be as the Angels of Heaven. Likewiſe he intends to deſtroy the Subſtance of our Bodies, but he will free them from Corruption, from Death, and clothe them with Glory and Immortality; ſo that this vile Body ſhall be rendered conformable to the glorious Body of the Son of God, and ſhall ſhine as the Sun: So God will not altogether deſtroy the World, and aboliſh his Subſtance, but he will rectify all its Imperfections, and add to it a greater Glory. If it be lawful for me to diſcover here all my Thoughts, I muſt ſay, that I put a greater Difference between Heaven and Earth; for the Earth is altogether

ther corrupt, and ſpoiled with Sin; it is the Earth chiefly, that groans under the Burden of ſo many Iniquities, which reign in it; but if Heaven is guilty of any Crime, it is becauſe it hath given Light to ſuch as have been Rebels againſt the Divine Majeſty, and aſſiſted the curſed Earth by its favourable Influences. Becauſe of this great Difference, it is my Opinion, that the Earth ſhall be deſtroyed by Fire; and that all its beautiful Buildings, and proud Palaces, ſhall be turned into Aſhes. But the Change which ſhall happen in Heaven, ſhall only be to make it more beautiful and brighter, that the Children of God may have there a more glorious Palace. This ſeems to have been typified in the ceremonial Law; for as we have already obſerved, ſpeaking of that which ſhall happen to the Soul and Body, that when an earthen Veſſel was defiled, it was to be broken to pieces; but ſuch Veſſels as were of a more precious Metal, as of Braſs, or of Silver, or of Gold, were to be purified with Fire; likewiſe the Earth, with all its Works, ſhall paſs through the Flames, ſo that it ſhall loſe its preſent Shape and Qualities. But Heaven, that is as Braſs, or rather as fine Silver, ſhall only be purified by the Fire of the laſt Judgment. If you remove the Cauſe, you take away alſo the Effect; if you remove away Sin, you alſo remove its Puniſhment. Now it is becauſe of Man's Sin, that the World hath and ſhall ſee ſo great a Change. Therefore as God, by his infinite Mercy, hath forgiven Man's Sin, it is alſo to be expected from the ſame Mercy, that he will not totally deſtroy the World, but that he will rather free it from Corruption, unto which our Sin hath made it ſubject.

Unleſs God deals in this Manner, our Joy and Comfort ſeems not complete, and God appears not perfectly ſatisfied and reconciled. While a Subject continues in Rebellion, and in the Diſpleaſure of his Prince, not only his Perſon is purſued and puniſhed, but all that belong to him bear the Marks of Wrath

and Indignation of the Prince whom he hath offended. His Dwelling-houſe is commonly pulled down, his Woods are cut and mangled, and his Inheritance is deſtroyed: But when he has made his Peace, his Houſe is built up again, all ſigns of the King's Diſpleaſure are taken away, and every Thing appears with a more pleaſant Countenance. Thus becauſe of our Rebellion, and our Treaſon againſt God, he hath puniſhed the World for our Sakes, and hath made it ſenſible of his Wrath: But now that our Peace is made, or rather, God having made Peace by the Blood of his Son, we may juſtly expect that he will remove all Signs of his Diſpleaſure and Revenge. I remember, upon this Subject, what *David* ſaid to God, when he ſaw the Angel deſtroy *Jeruſalem*; *I have ſinned, and I have done wickedly*; *but theſe Sheep, what have they done?* 2 Sam. xxiv. In the ſame Manner every Believer may ſay to God, Lo, I have ſinned, O Lord; I and my Brethren have done wickedly; but theſe inanimate Creatures, what have they done? Our Sins have defiled the Earth: And all that may be objected againſt Heaven, is, to have yielded Light and Aſſiſtance to us Rebels. Since therefore thou blotted out our Sins, and pardoned our Rebellions, ſpare theſe harmleſs Creatures, which cannot be puniſhed for our Sakes.

At preſent we may, without Difficulty, underſtand the fore-mentioned Paſſages of holy Scripture, and ſuch as tend to the ſame Purpoſe. For when *David* and St. Paul aſſure us, *That the Heavens ſhall periſh, and they ſhall be changed as a Garment*; I anſwer, That they ſhall periſh in reſpect of their Qualities, but not of their Subſtance; and that the Change ſhall not be as when one Garment is caſt off, and another taken; but as when the Spots and Blemiſhes of an old Garment are taken away, and it become a freſher. When your Clothing is grown old, and worn out, if it were in your Power to make it become new again, and as beautiful as ever it was, you would never think of

of ſeeking for new Stuff. That which is impoſſible to Men, is poſſible with God, *Luke* vi. And when our Saviour in St. *Matthew's* Goſpel, ſaith, *That the Heavens and the Earth ſhall paſs away, but my Word ſhall not paſs away*; I might affirm that theſe Words are to be underſtood comparatively, that is to ſay, that the Heavens, and the Earth, ſhall paſs away, rather than that the Words of God ſhould fail of an Accompliſhment. Our Saviour confirms this Interpretation, when he ſaith, in St. *Luke's* Goſpel, *It is eaſier for Heaven and Earth to paſs away, than that one Tittle of the Law ſhould not be fulfilled.* The holy Scripture is full of ſuch Kind of Expreſſions; but I would rather ſtick to the Anſwers which I have already given in the former Text, and ſay, that the Heavens and the Earth ſhall paſs away, not in Regard of their Subſtance, but only in Regard of their Qualities and Accidents that belong to them.

In St. *Peter's* Expreſſions, I find a double Compariſon or Alluſion; the one relates to the Tents that are pulled down when the Pieces are taken aſunder. This Compariſon is very proper; for this World is like a great *Tabernacle*, a *glorious Pavillion.* God ſhall pull off the Coverings, he ſhall cut the Cords, and ſeparate every Piece. But he will one Day raiſe it up again, gather every Piece, and make it a *Royal Tabernacle*, full of Splendour and Glory.

The other Compariſon is borrowed from *Goldſmiths*, who caſt the Gold and Metals into Pots, and then melt them in the Fire. Now as they deſtroy not by this Means the Gold and the Silver, but they cleanſe them from the Droſs and the Froth, cauſe them to appear in all their Brightneſs and Beauty, and give them a new Shape and Form; ſo the Fire of the laſt Judgement ſhall not conſume the Heavens and the Earth, but ſhall only give them a new Form and Beauty.

The ſtrongeſt Objection, in my Opinion, is occaſioned by the Words of St. *Peter, The Earth, and the*

Works that are therein, shall be burnt: But I answer to this, That there is a great Difference between burning, and being totally consumed and abolished. If it were in the Power of a Man, whose House is consumed to the Ground, to raise it up again from its Ruins, and to make it more beautiful and glorious than before, by his Word alone, he would never seek for other Materials. Now shall I say again, that what is impossible with Men, is possible with God? He hath already created the World with his Word, and he is able to restore it again by the same Word. Art hath found a Means to make beautiful Vessels of melting Ashes; and shall not God's Hand, unto which all the Skill of Art and the Strength of Nature cannot be compared, be able to gather up the Ashes of the Earth, and to make of it a Body full of Glory and Light?

From hence you may perceive, how we are to understand that there shall be new Heavens, and a new Earth; they shall not be new in regard of their Substance and Matter, which shall have been from the Beginning of the World, but they shall be new in regard of those noble Qualities which God shall give them. When a debauched Fellow leaves his wicked Life, and applies himself to the Practice of Piety and Virtue, we commonly say, That he is not the same, but that he is become another Man. Besides, when a Man hath cast off his old Rags, and put on a magnificent Garment, we are wont to say, that he is another Man: We shall have much more Cause to declare, that the Heavens, and the Earth, shall be new when God shall have renewed them. In short, he shall enrich the World with so many wonderful Beauties, he shall fill it full of so much Glory and Excellency, he shall cause it to be so perfect, that we shall have just Reason to look upon it as upon a new World, and to say with the Apostle, *The old Things are passed away; behold all Things are become new.* I would not have you think, *Christians*, that this Opinion

nion is grounded only upon human Reaſon. It is drawn from the Words of St. *Paul*, who, ſpeaking of the earthly and inſenſible Creatures, as may appear by his Deſign, he ſaith not only, *that they are ſubject to Vanity, not willingly, but becauſe of him who hath ſubjected them*; he underſtands Man, who by his Sin and Rebellion hath ſpoiled the World, and corrupted Nature; but he adds immediately after, *That they hope to be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, to be in the glorious Liberty of the Children of God*; afterwards he ſaith, *For we know that the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth in Pain together until now*; and before he ſaith, *That the earneſt Expectation of the Creature waiteth for the Manifeſtation of the Son of God.* In which Words, pray take Notice, that St. *Paul* ſaith not, that theſe Creatures ſhall be aboliſhed, and totally deſtroyed; but only that they ſhall be delivered from Vanity, and from the Bondage of Corruption, unto which the Sin of Man hath made them ſubject; and that this bleſſed Deliverance ſhall be brought to paſs at the Day of the Redemption of our Bodies, that is to ſay, at that Day when God ſhall redeem our Bodies from their Graves, and raiſe them up to the higheſt Glory and Happineſs, which hath been prepared for us from the Creation of the World.

Then ſhall happen that which is wont to be ſeen at the Marriage of a great King, or at a Coronation, or a Triumph. For not only the Prince and his Spouſe, and all the Court, appear in their richeſt and moſt glorious Attire, and loaden with their moſt precious Jewels, and the uſual Pomp of Triumphs is as extraordinary and glorious as can be contrived; but on ſuch Occaſions, the Prince's Palace is adorned with the richeſt, with the moſt magnificent and rareſt Ornaments; and the Town where this Solemnity is kept ſhows forth ſome Signs of the publick Rejoicing. Many Places are beautified with ſeveral Rarities; Theatres are erected, and triumphal Arches; the Streets are covered with Flowers and Tapeſtry; Fires

are kindled, and Torches are lighted; and there is no Corner but shows some Expressions of the publick Joy. Thus when our Lord Jesus Christ shall come down from the Clouds of Heaven, upon a Chariot of Triumph, when he shall come to consummate his Marriage, and to crown his Spouse, he shall not only appear in his greatest Glory, and most divine Pomp, but the Church also, his Spouse, shall be clothed with a Garment brighter than the Sun, and crowned with an immortal Glory. All the blessed Saints shall appear in their Attire of Joy, having Palms in their Hands, and Crowns upon their Heads; and the Companies of holy Angels shall sing round about. At that Time Paradise, which shall be his Palace and Bride-chamber, shall be adorned and enriched with all the Light and Glory which I have already essayed to describe to you. The whole World also, and every Part of it, shall partake of this great Glory, and celestial Pomp. The richest Coronations, the most magnificent Triumphs, the most stately Nuptials, are gone in a few Hours: Therefore the Fires of Joy are soon put out, the Hangings of the Streets are taken down, and the Arches and Pageants disappear, and the City is to be seen in its wonted Dress. But as this Glory and Joy of the Church shall never end, there the World shall for ever and ever bear the Signs of it. The Ornaments which it shall receive in this joyful Day, shall never be taken away, and the celestial Fires of Gladness shall never go out.

Although it is my Opinion, that the World shall never be totally destroyed, but that it shall become more beautiful and glorious than before, I shall not undertake to give you a Description of its several Parts, nor to tell you how it shall be employed. For Example, I shall not determine whether we are to understand our Saviour's Words in the Gospel literally, *That the Sun shall become dark, and the Moon shall not give its Light, and that the Stars shall fall from Heaven*; or whether these heavenly Bodies shall still continue; whether they

they ſhall be decked with a new Light and Glory, and to what Purpoſe they ſhall ſerve. For then we ſhall be enlightened with a greater Light than that of the heavenly Bodies. I ſhall only propoſe two Things: *Firſt*, That as in the human Bodies there are ſome Members which at preſent are uſeful, but then they ſhall be only for Ornament and Beauty; likewiſe in the great World, there are many Things which ſhall then be of no Uſe; nevertheleſs, they ſhall be preſerved for the Beauty and Perfection of the World. *Secondly*, That as Man, the little World, ſhall then be more beautiful and perfect than when God firſt created him; likewiſe this great World ſhall receive more Beauty, more Ornaments and Perfection, than when God drew it out of its firſt *Chaos*. As much Difference as there is between the ſecond *Adam* and the firſt, between the heavenly Paradiſe and the earthly, ſo much ſhall there be between the firſt and the ſecond World. So that we ſhall have good Cauſe to ſay of this great Palace, which is to be deſtroyed, and reared up again by the mighty Hand of God, as the holy Prophet ſaid of *Solomon's* Temple, which we have already applied to our glorified Bodies, *The Glory of this ſecond Houſe ſhall be greater than the Glory of the firſt.*

Some enquire whether we ſhall know one another in this ſtate of eternal Glory and Happineſs; I mean, whether the Subject ſhall know his Prince and King? Whether the Sheep ſhall know their Paſtor, and the Paſtor his Sheep? Whether the Father ſhall know his Son, the Son the Father, the Huſband his Wife, and the Wife her Huſband, and ſo forth?

Though this Queſtion is of the Number of ſuch as are more curious than needful to be known; nevertheleſs, an Anſwer ſeems to carry with it ſome Kind of Comfort and Satisfaction. I ſhould judge, that this Treatiſe would not be perfect, if I did not ſay, ſomething to this noble Subject: But what I ſhall ſay, ſhall be with the ſame Moderation and Reſervedneſs, as I have expreſſed in anſwering to the former Queſtions.

tions. For although what I ſhall ſpeak, ſeems to me very plain, and without Difficulty; others may have a different Opinion, without any Prejudice to their Salvation. However, I may affirm for an infallible Truth, that the Glory of Heaven, as well as Grace, ſhall bring Nature to Perfection, but ſhall not deſtroy it. It ſhall add to it other Excellencies, but it ſhall not take away thoſe that it hath already. It ſhall not aboliſh any of the Faculties, but it ſhall beautify and enrich them with new Ornaments. Therefore, conſequently, it ſhall not take away our Memory, which is one of the rareſt Gifts and Abilities of the reaſonable Soul.

I confeſs that it is ſaid, *That the former Things ſhall be remembered no more, and that they ſhall come no more into our Mind.* But this is to be underſtood of the Evils and Calamities, of this preſent Life: And we are not to underſtand the Words ſo, that we ſhall totally forget all the former Evils and Miſeries, and ſhall not remember to have ſuffered them. St. *John* ſaith the contrary, when he repreſents the Angel opening the fifth Seal; that he ſaw under the golden Altar, which was before the Throne of God, the Souls of them who had been martyred for the Word of God, and for the Teſtimony of the Truth, crying out with a loud Voice, *How long, O Lord, holy and true, doſt thou not judge and revenge our Blood upon the Inhabitants of the Earth?* I confeſs theſe Words may be underſtood in a figurative Senſe, as when God ſaith to *Cain*, *The Voice of thy Brother's Blood cries from the Earth unto me*; and as St. *Paul* ſaith, *that the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt ſpeaks better Things than the Blood of Abel.* However, from hence we may conclude, that the Remembrance of the Calamities and Perſecutions which we have endured in this Life, is not inconſiſtent with Happineſs. This Remembrance is ſo far from prejudicing our Felicity, that on the contrary, it ſhall increaſe and enlarge it, and cauſe us to reliſh it the more. When the Prophet ſaith, *That the former Things*

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ſhall be remembered no more, and they ſhall never come to Mind, he underſtands that the former Evils ſhall never be felt, and that we ſhall be for ever ſheltered from all Miſeries and Misfortunes.

I cannot expreſs this by a nobler and more proper Example, than that of *Joſeph:* When he went out of Priſon to take the Government of *Egypt*, and had ſtrengthened himſelf by a rich Alliance in Marriage, he named his eldeſt Son *Manaſſeh*, which ſignifies, *Forgetfulneſs, or forgetful; for he ſaid, God hath made me forget all my Labour, and my Father's Houſe*; altho' this holy Man had not altogether forgotten thoſe Things; for he knew afterwards his Brethren, and told them of the Miſchief which they had intended againſt him, and which God had turned to Good: But he ſpoke in this Manner, becauſe God had changed his Miſery and Impriſonment into Glory and Honour. In this Senſe we are to underſtand theſe Words, *The former Things ſhall be remembered no more*; becauſe, inſtead of the Evils and Miſeries which we endure here below, we ſhall enter into an eternal Glory and Happineſs. The Prophet expounds himſelf ſufficiently in the next Words; for when he had ſaid, *The former Things ſhall not be remembered, nor come into Mind*, he adds immediately after, *Be glad and rejoice in that which I create.* The Holy Ghoſt confirms us in this Interpretation in another Place, in theſe Words, *All Tears ſhall be wiped off from our Eyes; there ſhall be no more Sorrow, nor Crying, nor Pain; but eternal Joy and Gladneſs ſhall be upon our Heads.*

Since God intends not to deſtroy thoſe Gifts and Abilities, which he had beſtowed upon us in this Life, much leſs ſhall he aboliſh our Knowledge, which is one of the brighteſt Beams of Glory. This Knowledge ſhall be ſo far from diminiſhing or decaying, that it ſhall then increaſe more and more, until it comes to the higheſt Perfection. As the Air looſeth nothing of its Twilight at Break of Day, when the Sun riſeth upon our Heads; but it rather looſeth all Obſcurity

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and Darkneſs, which the Preſence of the Sun draws away, until it be perfectly enlightened; likewiſe our Underſtanding ſhall loſe nothing of that Light and Perfection which it receives now from the Breaking of the Day of God's Grace. But as the Sun of Righteouſneſs riſeth upon it more and more in Joy and Salvation, it ſhall perfectly loſe all Darkneſs and Ignorance by Degrees until it be fully enlightened. From hence we may probably conclude, that we ſhall know all the Perſons in Heaven, whom we have known here on Earth. For if the Glorified ſhall remember the Wicked, who have tormented them, they muſt needs remember all Believers, who have beſtowed on them their Alms, and done them Good. If it were otherwiſe, the Apoſtle St. *Paul* would not tell the *Corinthians*, *We are your Glory, as alſo you are ours, at the Day of the Lord Jeſus:* And he would not write thus to the *Theſſalonians*; *What is our Hope, our Joy, and our Crown of Glory? Is it not you before the Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his Coming? Verily you are our Glory and our Joy.* Now, if in the State of Glory St. *Paul* ſhould not know the *Corinthians* and *Theſſalonians*, unto whom he had preached the Goſpel, how ſhall they be his Joy, his Glory, and his Crown, at the Coming of the Lord Jeſus? This Reaſon ſeems to me as clear as the Sun. Nevertheleſs, I cannot affirm, that in Heaven we ſhall know again them whom we have known upon Earth, by the Features of their Countenance; for there ſhall be a wonderful Alteration. The Faces of all the Saints ſhall be beautiful, ſo perfect, and full of Light and Glory, that the moſt knowing ſhall not be able to judge them to be the ſame whom we have ſeen upon Earth. Some therefore fancy that we ſhall know one another, by the Aſſiſtance of our Diſcourſe; but our Voice ſhall then be changed as well as our Countenance; and it is doubtful whether we ſhall diſcourſe of the former Things which happened on Earth; for our chief Employment ſhall be to behold God's Face, and to ſing forth his Praiſes. I had rather there-

fore affirm, that we ſhall know one another by an infuſed Knowledge, by which we ſhall know all Things which are poſſible to be known, and by the Light of that Glory with which God ſhall fill our Souls. In ſhort, this Knowledge ſhall proceed from no other Principle than that of all the Knowledge with which we ſhall be crowned in that State of Glory and Perfection.

I am therefore more than fully perſuaded, that we ſhall know in Heaven our Parents and our Friends, and generally all the Perſons whom we have known here below: But we ſhall alſo perfectly know them whom we never knew in the World, and never ſaw with the Eyes of the Fleſh. We ſhall know the holy and bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apoſtles, the Evangeliſts, the Confeſſors, the Martyrs, and generally, without Exception, all the Saints, who ſhall be crowned with Glory and Joy in Heaven. There is nobody can queſtion, but that, in the celeſtial Paradiſe, we ſhall have more Knowledge and Underſtanding, than ever *Adam* had in the earthly. Now when God cauſed a deep Sleep to fall upon him, when he took one of his Ribs and formed therewith a Woman, he had ſeen none of this done; nevertheleſs, when his Eyes were open, he knew her: Therefore he declared his Judgement in this Manner, *This is Bone of my Bone, and Fleſh of my Fleſh.* And ſhall not we, when God ſhall rouſe us up from the deep ſleep of Death, with the Sound of the laſt Trumpet, know the Spouſe of the Son of God, which he hath drawn out of his Side and moulded with his own precious Blood? St. *Peter*, when he was enlightened by a Beam of our Saviour's Glory in his Transfiguration, knew *Moſes* and *Elias*, whom he had never ſeen before. And ſhall not we know all the Children of God upon Mount *Sion*, when we ſhall be transfigured ourſelves; and that we ſhall ſhine as the heavenly Light; whereof that of Mount *Tabor* was but an imperfect Shadow and Repreſentation? But though we ſhall know in Heaven all the Perſons whom we have known on Earth, we ſhall look

look upon them in another Manner, and love them with another Affection; for all that we have of the animal and earthly Life ſhall be totally aboliſhed; and as our Knowledge ſhall be clear and certain, our Love ſhall be pure and heavenly. I am not able to expreſs this better than St. *Paul* doth in theſe Words, *Although I have known Chriſt according to the Fleſh, nevertheleſs, I know him no more according to the Fleſh. Chriſtians*, conſider well theſe Expreſſions; they will be able to remove all Difficulty and Doubts out of your Minds. We are fully perſuaded, that all the Inhabitants of Heaven ſhall know very well our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: For how can it be otherwiſe, but that we muſt know this glorious Monarch of Men, and of Angels, whoſe ſacred Countenance ſhall ſhine as the Sun; and who ſhall ſit upon his magnificent Throne, about which Legions of *Seraphims* fly, and who ſhall be there adored for ever by all the Church of Glory? Nevertheleſs St. *Paul* ſaith, *That although he hath known Jeſus Chriſt according to the Fleſh*; that is to ſay, according to the Manner of his low and earthly Life, when he lived here on Earth; at preſent he did not know him in the ſame Manner, he did not conſider him otherwiſe, but as he is at preſent inveſted with an unſpeakable Glory and Splendour. In the ſame Manner, although we ſhall know all them whom we have known on Earth, we ſhall no more know them according to the Fleſh, that is to ſay, according to this animal and ſenſual Life; our Love ſhall have nothing of earthly or carnal, but it ſhall be altogether ſpiritual and heavenly.

I beſeech you, Chriſtians, conſider well what St. *Matthew* tells us in Chap. xxi. The *Sadducees*, who ſay there is no Reſurrection, came to Chriſt to entangle him with this difficult Queſtion, *Maſter*, Moſes *ſaid, If a Man die having no Children, his Brother ſhall marry his Wife, and raiſe Seed unto his Brother. Now there were with us ſeven Brethren; the firſt, when he had married a Wife, deceaſed; and having no Iſſue, left his Wife unto his Brethren; likewiſe the ſecond alſo, and the third,*

third, unto the ſeventh; and laſt of all the Woman died alſo; therefore in the Reſurrection, whoſe Wife ſhall ſhe be of the ſeven; for they all had her. Our Saviour anſwers not, That this Woman ſhall belong to none of thoſe Huſbands becauſe they ſhall not know her, nor diſtinguiſh her from other Women; but he replies to them, *You do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God; for in the Reſurrection they neither marry, nor are given in Marriage; but are as the Angels of God in Heaven.* From hence we may conclude, that although in Heaven we ſhall know one another, we ſhall have nothing of that carnal Love, which we have at preſent, and which cauſeth us to put ſo much Difference between one Perſon and another. A Father may know his Children, but his Love ſhall not be grounded upon Conſiderations of Fleſh and Blood; he ſhall love them only, becauſe they are amongſt the Children of God, and the Heirs of the Kingdom, and becauſe he ſhall appear in the Image of the heavenly Father cloathed with his Light, and crowned with his immortal Glory. *Finally*, We ſhall love nothing but in God, and for his Sake, as they ſhall be in God, and God in them. In this Manner it ſhall not be poſſible to love them more or leſs; Charity or Love, the Queen of Virtues, ſhall then ſit upon its Throne, and attain to the higheſt Degree of Perfection.

If you think ſeriouſly upon this, *Chriſtians*, you ſhall find Arguments to anſwer the vain Objections of ſuch as ſay, That if we come to the Knowledge of one another in Heaven, that will be able to diſturb us of our Satisfaction. For as it is a Comfort and Joy to meet there with our Parents and Friends; in like Manner, it will be a Trouble and Affliction, not to find there all ſuch whom we have formerly loved. We may form and retort the ſame Objection, with more Reaſon, againſt thoſe who believed that we ſhall not know one another in Heaven. For we may ſay alſo, that not knowing the Perſons, we ſhall not know whether our Parents, or our Friends, are there; and this

is likely to diſturb and trouble the Quiet, and Satiſfaction of our Minds. But to argue in this groſs Manner is to confound Heaven with the Earth.

Grief and Diſpleaſure can never be admitted in a Paradiſe of Joy and perfect Happineſs. In this glorious Condition, our Knowledge ſhall be ſo clear, our Charity ſo pure, our Love to God ſo fervent, that as we ſhall love all Things which God ſhall love, and where his Image ſhall appear; ſo it ſhall not be poſſible for us to love them whom God ſhall hate, them who ſhall bear the Marks and Characters of the Devil.

When *David* was yet here upon Earth, he ſaid unto God, *Lord, do I not hate them that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect Hatred; they have been to me as mine Enemies*, Pſ. cxxxix. In the ſame Manner we ſhall rather ſpeak in Heaven, in the State of Perfection, when God ſhall be in us *All in All*, and we ſhall be all in God. Some there are that enquire, What Kind of Language we ſhall ſpeak in Heaven? Some reply, That we ſhall ſpeak the Language of Angels; grounding their Opinion upon what St. *Paul* ſays to the *Corinthians*, *Though I ſpeak with the Tongues of Men, and of Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as ſounding Braſs, or a tinkling Cymbal.*

But this is a fantaſtical Opinion; for as the Angels are pure Spirits, they can have no Tongue, nor proper Language. I confeſs, in ſome holy Apparitions, Angels have ſpoken to Men; but it was by moving the Tongues of their borrowed Bodies; or by employing ſome other corporal Organ. Then they ſpoke in the Language of thoſe to whom they were ſent, and had no particular or proper Dialect. But if Angels did ſpeak, their Language would excel as much that of Men, as the angelical Nature excels the human. By the Tongues of Angels therefore our Apoſtle underſtands an excellent Tongue, better than that of Men.

Others fancy, that in Heaven we ſhall ſpeak no other Language but the *Hebrew*, becauſe, ſay they, that it is the

the Tongue which God hath sanctified from the Beginning of the World, in which he spoke to the Patriarchs and holy Prophets; in which he proclaimed his Law upon Mount *Sinai*, in the Audience of all the People of *Israel*, and in which he hath recorded his sacred Law with his own Finger. They say that 'tis the Language which *Adam* spoke in the earthly Paradise, in the State of Innocency, and which all the Inhabitants of the World made use of before God sent among them a Division of Tongues. And we may also affirm, that 'twas the Language used by our Saviour while he was on Earth. For the *Syriack*, which he commonly spoke as the rest of the *Jews*, is a Dialect of the *Hebrew*, or a kind of corrupted *Hebrew*. Others are yet of Opinion, that as then we shall attain to all the Knowledge and Sciences, we shall not be ignorant of any Kind of Languages, but that with them we shall declare the wonderful Works of God, as the Apostle at the Day of *Pentecost*. As the holy Scripture is silent upon the Matter, I shall affirm nothing.

But in general Terms I may declare, that as God caused a division of Tongues to punish Man's Insolence and Pride; and as the different Languages of People is an Effect of their Sin, 'tis more certain, that this Confusion and Difference shall be altogether taken away, and that nothing shall be said in Heaven but shall be very well understood by all the glorified Saints. I may add, moreover, that in case we should speak so well all Manner of Languages which have been in the World, 'tis nevertheless very likely that we shall all speak but one Language, that we may all praise God with the same Voice. But whether this shall be the holy Language; or another more perfect and majestick, which God shall sanctify for this Purpose, we cannot know until God of his infinite Mercy shall have raised us to this State of Glory and perfect Happiness. From what we have already said, Christians, you may easily understand, that our Happiness hath three Steps or Degrees; the first is attainable in this Life; the second at the Egress of the Soul out of the Body; the third is at the great Day of our glorious Resurrection. For already in this Life, God bestows upon us the First-fruits of his Glory, and the Foretastes of his Paradise. The Spirit of God, and of his Glory, rests at present upon us, which fills us full of an unspeakable glorious Joy, and with the Peace of God which passeth all understanding. When our Souls depart out of this wretched and infirm Body, God gathers them up into the Bundle of Life; he introduceth them into the blessed Company of the Angels and glorified Spirits, and admits them to the Contemplation of his Face, which is Fulness of Joy. But in this Day of Triumph, when Christ shall come down from Heaven to judge the Quick and the Dead, he will advance us both in Soul and Body, to the highest Glory and Happiness whereof we are capable. For this Reason the Name

of Glory is aſcribed to the high degree of Happineſs which is promiſed to us at the bleſſed Appearing of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the viiith *Chap.* to the *Romans*, where the Apoſtle ſaith, *That the Creature was made ſubject to Vanity, not willingly, but by Reaſon of him who hath ſubjected the ſame in Hope; becauſe the Creature itſelf ſhall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God.* And in the iiid *Chap.* to the *Coloſſ.* he ſaith *You are dead, and your Life is hid with Chriſt in God; when Chriſt who is your Life ſhall appear, you ſhall appear alſo with him in Glory.* Therefore this glorious Appearing is ſtiled, *A bleſſed Hope*, that is to ſay, the Fulfilling and Accompliſhment of all that we expect or Hope for; as in the iid *Chap.* to *Titus* St. *Paul* ſaith, *We expect the bleſſed Hope, the Appearing of the Glory of our great God, who is the Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

Then ſhall be the Conſummation of the Glory, Head, and Members; for then the Son of God ſhall cauſe the Damned to feel that Almighty Power which he poſſeſſeth in Heaven and Earth, and in the Depth. He ſhall diſcover himſelf to the Faithful, in his greateſt Glory, and moſt divine Splendour. Therefore this glorious Day of his Deſcent from Heaven, with the Angels of his Power, is mentioned as the firſt Day of his *Manifeſtation*, of his *Appearing*, and of his *Kingdom*. For this Cauſe, when the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of this Day, he ſtiles it, *The Day of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, or *the Day of our Lord Jeſus*; as alſo, *the Day of the Lord*, and *the Day of God*. As it ſhall be the Day of the Lord Jeſus, it ſhall alſo be our Day. Therefore St. *Paul* calls it, *The Day of our Redemption*, becauſe that in this Day our Lord ſhall redeem our Bodies out of their Graves, and ſhall beſtow upon both our Souls and Bodies, *Eph.* iv. all the Fruits of the Redemption, which he hath purchaſed for us with his Blood, *Rom.* viii. and ſhall raiſe up to the higheſt Glory, and moſt perfect Happineſs, *Heb.* ix. 'Tis the happy Day of Conſummation of our Marriage with the Divine Lamb. 'Tis the Day of our Joy and Triumph with the glorified Men and Angels. 'Tis the Day of our Coronation, and of our Entrance into our Kingdom, when the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, ſhall crown us with his own Hand, and put us in Poſſeſſion of an Empire prepared for us in the Beginning of the World. In a Word, 'tis the Day when we ſhall come to the Lord Jeſus, and be with him, as he with the Father, that we may be all in one.

Becauſe of the glorious and wonderful Things that ſhall come to paſs on this Day, 'tis named, *The great Day*. St. *Jude* calls it thus: When he ſpeaks of the revolted Angels, he ſaith, *That God hath reſerved them in everlaſting Chains under Darkneſs unto the Judgment of the great Day.* In this Manner many underſtand the Words of St. *John*, when he deſcribes the foul Spirits, and likens them to Frogs that he ſaw coming out of the Dragon's Mouth, and

and of the Beaſt, and out of the Mouth of the falſe Prophet, and ſaith, *they are the Spirits of the Devil working Miracles, which God ſent forth unto the Kings of the Earth, and of the whole World, to gather them to the Battle of that great Day of God Almighty*, Rev. xvi.

Laſtly, This glorious Day is not only called *the Day of Judgment, the Day of the Lord, the Day of our Redemption, and the great Day*; but oft-times without any Addition, is ſtiled *the Day*, and *that Day*, as *Hebrews* x. *Let us conſider one another to provoke unto Love and good Works; not forſaking the aſſembling ourſelves together, as the Manner of ſome is; but exhorting one another, and ſo much the more as ye ſee the Day approaching.* In the Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, *You are not in Darkneſs, that that Day ſhould ſurpriſe you.* Thus in the ſecond Epiſtle to *Timothy*, and 1ſt *Chap.* St. *Paul* ſaith, *I know whom I have believed, and am perſuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that Day.* And when he remembers the good and charitable Deeds of *Oneſiphorus*, he prays for him in this Manner, *the Lord grant unto him, that he may find Mercy of the Lord in that Day*; and in the ivth Chapter, ſpeaking of himſelf, he ſaith, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give me at that Day.*

It is ſo ſtiled, becauſe of its excellency; it is the Day of Days, the End of all the Seaſons, the Conſummation of all Ages and Times; after this there ſhall be no more Alteration of Days, Months, and Years. Therefore an Angel is repreſented in the *Revelations* lifting up his Hands to Heaven, ſwearing by the living God who hath created Heaven and all Things therein, the Earth and all Things in it, and the Sea, and the Things that are therein, That there ſhall be no more Time: For inſtead of this unconſtant Time, which flies away without leaving any Sign of its Being, an everlaſting Eternity ſhall ſucceed; an Eternity always the ſame, always bleſſed with Happineſs, always glorious and joyful. This divine and magnificent Day ſhall begin at the End of other Days, but ſhall never draw to an End. Therefore St. *Peter* in theſe Words, calls it an eternal Day, or Eternity, 2 *Pet.* iii. *Glory be to the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, both now and for ever*, Amen. And in Expectation of this Day of Days, all Creatures are groaning and travelling in Pain until now; but eſpecially Believers, who have the Firſt-fruits of the Spirit, groan in themſelves, deſiring with an earneſt and holy Deſire to ſee the Breaking of the great and glorious Day. It is the End of all the Prophecies, and the Accompliſhment of all God's gracious Promiſes, to his People in all Ages of the World; it is the End and Reward of our ſpiritual Calling, and fulfilling of all our Deſires and Expectations, and crowning of all our Labours, and the higheſt Step of that Glory and Happineſs unto which we pretend.

You devout Souls, that delight in the Contemplation of celeſtial Things, I pray conſider with me the Accompliſhment and the Perfection of three Kinds of Work, which have been ſucceeded by their ſeveral Reſts. The firſt was that of the Creation of the World; for in ſix Days God created the Heaven and the Earth, and all Things in them, and when he had finiſhed his Works, and found that they were good and perfect, he reſted the ſeventh Day, *Gen.* i. and ii. therefore he bleſſed and ſanctified it. The ſecond great Work was that of *Redemption*; for when our Saviour had fulfilled all the Prophecies which mentioned him; when he cauſed the Meaning of all the antient Types and Figures to appear in his *Perſon* and *Sufferings*; when he had fully ſatisfied the Juſtice of God, and purchaſed for us with his Blood an eternal Redemption, he cried out, *All is finiſhed*, John xix. and he bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghoſt. After this, Chriſt had nothing more to do, nor ſuffer, but he is gone into Heaven to reſt from all his Works, *Rev.* v. and to take Poſſeſſion of all Power, Riches, Wiſdom, Strength, Honour, Glory, and Praiſe. The third Work is that of our *Glorification*; when we ſhall ſee the new Heavens appear, and a new Earth, when our Bodies ſhall be clothed with Incorruption and Immortality, and united again to our Souls; and when in both Soul and Body we ſhall attain to the higheſt Glory, and moſt perfect Happineſs, then he that ſits upon the Throne of Eternity ſhall ſay with a loud Voice, *Rev.* xxi. *All is finiſhed.*

Afterwards the Sabbath of Sabbaths ſhall ſucceed that eternal Reſt, and that Peace which ſhall never be interrupted by any Unhappineſs. We may ſay, that the firſt Reſt is that of God the Father, the ſecond belongs to the Son, the third is the Reſt of the Holy Ghoſt, that ſhall have then gathered all the Saints together, reared up the Houſe of God to the Roof, and perfectly enlightened and ſanctified the *Catholick Church*, from whence ſhall proceed its eternal Glory and Happineſs: Or rather, we may ſay, that this laſt Reſt is the Reſt of all the three Perſons of the moſt holy and glorious Trinity; for then they ſhall reſt from all Manner of Works for ever and ever, and we in the Boſom of their Glory: We ſhall alſo enjoy an everlaſting Reſt. When the Works of Creation were finiſhed, the Works of Redemption were next expected; and after the Works of Redemption, we hope for the Works of our final Glorification. But when God ſhall have brought us all into his glorious Reſt, and that he ſhall have declared for the third Time from Heaven, *All is finiſhed*, we ſhall then expect nothing, neither from God's Juſtice, nor from his Mercy; for all God's Enemies ſhall be then deſtroyed, and it ſhall not be poſſible to add any Thing to the Infamy of their Puniſhments, nor to the Violence of their Torments. There ſhall be no more Tears to be wiped, no more Evils to be feared, nor Advantage to be expected, nor Crowns to receive; for then all the Children of God ſhall be perfectly glorified. They ſhall enjoy

joy God himſelf, who ſhall be their Inheritance for ever, and the bottomleſs Fountain of all their Delights; ſo that it ſhall not be poſſible to add any Thing to their infinite Glory, nor to their eternal Happineſs. God ſhall then, if I may ſo ſpeak, take away all Means of expreſſing any greater Liberality and Bounty.

Abraham leaped for Joy, when he ſaw the Birth-day and Humiliation of the Son of God: How ſhould we rejoice and be tranſported out of ourſelves, when we think upon this glorious Day of the Appearing of our great God and Saviour! When with the Eye of Faith we behold him ſitting upon the Clouds of Heaven, coming to put a Period to Sin and Death; to ſhut up the Devil and his Angels in the bottomleſs Pit of Hell, to deliver his Church from all Evils, Enemies, and Dangers, and to promote it to the higheſt Felicity, and to an everlaſting Glory.

After this, believing Soul, I muſt draw the curtain, and ſuffer my Pen to fall from my Hand; for mine Eyes dazzle at the Sight of ſo ſhining a Light, and my Soul is ſurprized at the Conſideration of ſo much Glory, and ſo perfect an Happineſs.

Although I have lengthened this Treatiſe more than I at firſt propoſed to myſelf, I muſt needs confeſs, that whatſoever I have ſaid upon ſo rich and glorious a Subject, falls far ſhort of the Truth. But I am perſuaded, that there will be here enough for pious and devout Souls, who ſeek not for the Ornament of Language, nor for the Flouriſhes of Rhetorick, but for the true and ſolid Comforts of God's holy Word. You Chriſtians and believing Souls, for whoſe Sake I have undertaken this Work, I intreat you for the Glory of God, and for your own Salvation, to preſerve in your Minds the Ideas of theſe Things that I have now ſpoken of. Imprint them in your Memories, grave them upon your Hearts with the Point of a Diamond, and eſpecially take Delight in reducing them to Practice, and you ſhall aſſuredly find both Joy and Comfort. Think often upon Death, let it be the moſt familiar and moſt pleaſant Subject of your Diſcourſe; expect it at every Moment, and lead ſuch a Life as if Death were ready upon your Lips. Fear not the many Troubles of this human Life; doubt not but that God hath determined the Time and Manner of your going out of the World, and that every Kind of Death of the Children of God is precious in his Sight. Since you are to live but a ſhort Time upon Earth, ſettle not your Hearts, but poſſeſs your Riches and Advantages, not as poſſeſſing them, remembering, that the Faſhion of the World paſſeth away. Since it is Sin alone that makes Death appear ſo terrible to us, hate all Manner of Vice, and ſtudy the Practice of Piety.

And in regard there is nobody at the Hour of Death but wiſheth that he had lived well, think upon your latter End, and you ſhall never be able to ſin. If your Mind is diſturbed with the Conſideration of thoſe Things which ſhall happen after your

Deceaſe, learn to reſt upon the wiſe Providence of God, that ſees into the Depths of Eternity, that provides for all Things, and that draws Light out of the greateſt Darkneſs. Are you caſt upon a Bed of Sickneſs and Diſeaſe, open the Eye of Faith, and you ſhall ſee yourſelves encompaſſed about with holy Angels, and in the Arms of God himſelf: Dread not the Violence of Pain, for God ſhall never forſake you in your Grief, he ſhall never ſuffer you to be afflicted above what you are able to endure. Fancy him not as a dreadful and mercileſs Judge, but look upon him as a gracious and loving Father, who deſires not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he ſhould repent and live. If Death appears to you with a frightful Countenance, if it fill you full of Terrors, caſt your Eyes by Faith upon the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and you ſhall ſee there all the Weapons and Armour of Death broken in Pieces. You ſhall ſee there a divine and precious Blood running down, which has ſatisfied for all our Sins, and marked unto you the way of God's eternal Sanctuary. Let not the Grave that is digging for you terrify you, ſince the King of Kings has been laid there before you, and filled it with his moſt divine Odours. Let Death ſeem to you never ſo dreadful, remember that our Saviour hath overcome it by his Reſurrection. Fear not therefore to encounter it, for our great God and Saviour ſhall make you partake of his Victory. And that you might cauſe in your Souls an earneſt Longing to go to Heaven; looking upon Jeſus Chriſt there, who prepares a Place for you, and deſires that you ſhould be eternally with him, to behold his Joy and Glory. Fear not the Separation of the Soul from the Body, ſince Death, which ſhall ſeparate you from yourſelves, is not able to ſeparate you from the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, the Soul of our Souls, the Seal of the Promiſes of God, and the Earneſt of our future Inheritance. Inſtead of looking behind, and longing for theſe periſhing Advantages, and for Honours that can only dazzle the Eye; conſider that Death ſhall wipe away all Tears, remove all your Grief, and raiſe you above all the Stores of the World, above all the Miſeries and Troubles that cover the Face of the Earth. That you may be able to follow this Death more chearfully, remember that it draws you out of a Place all polluted with Sin, and infected with Impiety, to tranſport you into a new Heaven, adorned with Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, and perfumed with the Prayers, Praiſe, and Thankſgiving of the glorified Saints: Remember that it frees you from all Remains of Corruption, and gives Death's Wound to all your Luſts. Mind not ſo much as the falſe Appearance of Death; for to the Wicked it is as it were the Suburbs of Hell, the Jaws of the bottomleſs Pit, and the Beginning of their endleſs Torments; but to you, Believers, it is the Gate of Heaven, and Entrance into Paradiſe, and a Paſſage to a moſt happy Life. Learn to reliſh now the Joys wherewith

your

your Souls ſhall be for ever ſatisfied, when God ſhall crown you with his Glory, and make you drink of the Rivers of his Pleaſure. Since your Soul is going to put on a Garment of an immortal Colour, and to dwell for ever in the Palace which God hath built with his Almighty Hand, caſt off willingly this wretched, infirm, and corruptible Body.

Depart willingly out of this earthly Tabernacle, which turns of itſelf to Duſt. Conſider well, that though it fall by Death, it ſhall riſe again at the Reſurrection; and that then it ſhall at laſt become the Temple of God, and the Tabernacle of his Glory. Finally, O religious Souls, ſhut your Eyes to the World, and to all the Vanities that the World adores, and aſpire to the real Advantages which God hath prepared for you before the Creation of the World, and in which you ſhall joy when the World ſhall be no more. Let your precious Faith, and your bleſſed Hope, enter into Eternity itſelf, to behold that extraordinary Happineſs and Glory which God ſhall accompliſh when he ſhall bring us both in Soul and Body into this celeſtial Paradiſe, to ſee his Face, in which is Fulneſs of Joy.

In regard to this perfect Happineſs and infinite Glory, which never entered into the Heart and Thoughts of Man, ſhall never be perfectly accompliſhed, but at that Day when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall appear from Heaven, to be glorified in his Saints, and to become wonderful in all Believers; think always upon this glorious Day, the End of all our Wiſhes, the fulfilling of all our Hopes, and the Perfection of all thoſe Deſigns which God hath purpoſed in himſelf from Eternity.

You devout Souls, that are grieved to ſee the World proſper, and *Satan's* Empire flouriſh, to ſee God's Children ſubject to all the Darts of Death, take good Courage, and rejoice with an holy Joy; for ſhortly all the Enemies of God and of our Salvation ſhall be puniſhed with an everlaſting Puniſhment, as from the Preſence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power. Shortly the Devils, his Angels, his Agents and Slaves, ſhall be bound up in Chains of Darkneſs, and caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, and ſhut up in the Bottomleſs Pit. Shortly Death ſhall be no more, and this Church of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe Miſeries and Afflictions cauſe you to weep, ſhall be clothed with unſpeakable Light and Glory; it ſhall enter with Joy and Triumph into the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and you yourſelves ſhall ſing with all the glorified Armies of Heaven.

Since Chriſt ſhall come as a Thief in the Night, and ſhall ſurpriſe all the Children of the World unawares, to incline your Souls, Believers, to the Love of God, and Expectation of your merciful Lord; behave yourſelves in the ſame Manner as you would do if you were now at the Eve of this great Feſtival, as if you did ſpy already the Breaking of this moſt happy Day. Entertain now the ſame Affection and Joy, as if you did hear the Voice of God, and the Trumpet of the Archangel, as if the Earth was

already in a Flame, and as if Jesus Christ himself were coming in the Clouds of Heaven. And in regard no impure Thing shall enter into the heavenly and holy *Jerusalem*, and that without Holiness no Man shall see the Face of God, cleanse yourselves, Christians, from all Filthiness of the Flesh and of the Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord. Forsake all Manner of Vice, give yourselves over to Virtue, and to the Practice of good Works; imitate the Diligence of that faithful Servant, that you may not be ashamed at the Coming of your great Master. Take heed that ye be not like the wise Virgins, that slept as well as the foolish; but watch and pray, that you may not enter into Temptation; for the Spirit is willing, but the Flesh is weak. Redeem the Time, for the Days are evil, and make haste to put on the Garments of Righteousness and Innocence; fill your Hearts with the holy Oil of Faith, of Hope, and of Charity. Take your Lamps in your Hands, and let your Souls shine with a divine Light.

In this blessed Disposition let us go and meet our heavenly Bridegroom, and hasten his Coming by our Prayers and Groans. Let our Souls be full of Love; let them sigh for our divine Jesus, and being moved with the same Affections as St. *John*, let us say to him with an earnest Desire, *Come, Lord Jesus*; and if he answers, *For certain I come quickly*, let the Longing of our Souls increase more and more, that we may be able to pray more fervently, and let this Cry reach up to Heaven, *Come, Lord Jesus, even come, Lord, come quickly.* Amen.

A Prayer and Meditation for a believing Soul, that rejoiceth and comforts itself in looking upon Death's Destruction, and the everlasting and blessed Life which we hope to enjoy, both in Soul and Body, after the Resurrection.

O *Great Judge of the World, Author of Life and Happiness, thy Grace hath bestowed upon me the Seeds of Immortality, the Firstfruits of Glory, and the Foretastes of everlasting Delight; by Faith I have a Prospect into those Joys and Felicities of Paradise, into which my Soul shall enter at its Departure out of this wicked World, and into that Glory prepared for my Body at thy Appearing. O raise my Mind to eye continually that compleat and unspeakable Felicity and Glory, promised to both Soul and Body, when thou shalt be revealed from Heaven with Flames of Fire, to take Vengeance of Unbelievers, and to glorify the Saints. Let me not be unmindful of that magnificent Throne, where thou shalt sit to judge the Quick and the Dead, before which the greatest Princes and Monarchs, as well as their meanest Subjects and Slaves, must appear, to hear the just Sentence of their Doom, and to receive the Reward of their Deeds. Grant that I may now rejoice in Expectation of that happy Day, in which all the Enemies of thy Glory and our Salvation shall be destroyed, in which Satan,*

tan, his Angels and wicked Agents, and the Inſtruments of his Kingdom, ſhall be bound in Chains, and caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone from whence they ſhall never be releaſed; in which Death ſhall be no more; all the Living ſhall become immortal, and thy Church be crowned and enter in Triumph into that magnificent City, built with Gold, Pearls, and precious Stones, where thy Glory ſhall continue for ever to enlighten it, and accompliſh our Happineſs. O that I may now expect with Comfort and Joy, that bleſſed State where we ſhall neither hunger nor thirſt, but be advanced to the Condition and Perfection of Angels, be clothed with Light and Glory, and being crowned with an eternal Felicity, rejoice with the celeſtial Societies and Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, Confeſſors, and Martyrs, and with all the Princes and Monarchs, who have lived, and are departed, in thy Fear and Favour, and where we ſhall be admitted to the Viſion of God, and be changed and ſatisfied with his divine Likeneſs. O Lord! grant that I may always have this glorious and happy Day in my Thoughts, when all thy Promiſes ſhall be fulfilled, all thy Works finiſhed, and our Deſires and Expectations fully accompliſhed. And becauſe this Time and Day is unknown to us, give us Grace to live always waiting for it, as if we were at the Eve of this eternal Sabbath, that our Lamps may be trimmed, provided, and burn with the Oil of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and we ready and awake at thy glorious Appearing, clothed with a Wedding-Garment, fit to enter with thee into eternal Bleſſedneſs. Grant us Grace to deſire and look for this promiſed Redemption, long to hear the Sound of the laſt Trumpet, and behold thy Coming in the Clouds of Heaven, O divine Saviour! that we may aſcend to meet thee, and welcome thy glorious Appearance. O Lord, forgive our impatient Wiſhes, and haſten that Day for the Elect's Sake. Come with thy powerful Angels, and the Miniſters of thy heavenly Court, to execute Juſtice on thine Enemies, and deliver thy Servants. Come and put an End to this Wicked World, infeſted with Sin, and ſubject to Corruption and Vanity, and purge the Heavens and the Earth from all Pollution. Come and take Vengeance for the innocent Blood of thy Martyrs, ſhed by Antichriſt and his cruel Agents; bind the Devils in Chains of Darkneſs, and ſhut them up with Death for ever in the bottomleſs Pit. Lord Jeſus, have Pity on the Cries and Sufferings of thy diſtreſſed People. Come and deliver them out of this cruel Egypt, *out of this abominable* Babylon, *where they continue in Captivity. O merciful Lord! Is it not Time that thou ſhouldſt bring us to thy celeſtial* Canaan? *Give us to taſte of the Milk and Honey of the moſt refined Joys and Comfort, and introduce us into thine holy* Jeruſalem, *the City of Peace and everlaſting Reſt: Come, therefore and wipe away the Tears, and ſtop the Crying of thine afflicted People. Take them out of this infamous Priſon, open to them the Gates of thy magnificent Palace, clothe them with Light, and perfect thy Salvation and their Happineſs. We have been a long while contending with our ſpiritual and temporal Enemies, in our tedious and troubleſome Journey through the World, and at a Diſtance from thee; we now long to be nearer to thee, O wonderful Redeemer! who haſt accompliſhed all thy Works, and that of our*

Redeemer by thy Blood and Sufferings: Perfect, also, we beseech thee, that of our Glorification; receive us and thy Church into that complete Felicity prepared for us from the Beginning of the World, and purchased with thy precious Blood and Sufferings. O merciful God! admit us to that State where we have nothing to fear, nothing to desire, and nothing to wish for, but be always employed in praising thine infinite Bounty and Mercy. Join our Voices with the Anthems of the holy Angels, that with the blessed Saints we may be able to say, Now is come Salvation and Strength and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Christ; for Death is swallowed up in Victory, and the grand Accuser of our Brethren is shut up in the bottomless Pit, which accused them before our God Day and Night. And they have overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb, and have not loved their own Lives unto Death. Unto him, who hath loved and washed us from all our Sins in his Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God his Father, to him I say, as to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be Glory, Power, and Dominion, for ever. Amen.

An Account of some Remarkable Passages relating to Mr. Drelincourt, *who departed this Life at* Paris, *the 4th of* November, 1669; *taken out of the* French *Edition of his Book of* Death.

TO prevent false Reports spread abroad concerning the Death of our reverend Author, I thought it convenient to publish this brief and exact Narrative concerning his Person, Sickness, and Death: He was of a very strong and healthy Constitution, indefatigable in his Ministry, of such a sharp and active Spirit, and so pious for the Glory of God, that he spared not himself, either by Night or Day, in discharging the Duty of his Function, and in Acts of Charity, being naturally of a courteous and obliging Temper. He succeeded Mr. *Du Moulin*, who was removed to *Sedan*; and was a long Time the third Minister to serve that Congregation at *Charenton:* This continual and restless Employment in his Ministry, by Degrees, mightily impaired his Health, especially in the Declension of his Age.

In the Year 1668, the 30th of *April*, though indisposed, he adventured to accompany one of his Grand-daughters to her Grave, assisted by one of his Sons; but could scarce return Home; being weary and in a fainting Sweat, and his Countenance changed, which alarmed his Family; but, by some present Remedy, he then recovered. This Accident hindered him not from preaching the next Day at *Charenton*, in his Turn, nor from his daily Offices, wishing often he might die with his Pen in his Hand. When his family intreated him to spare himself

himſelf in his old Age, in viſiting the Sick and the Poor, unto whom he was very acceptable by reaſon of his excellent Talents in praying, and underſtanding how to comfort the Diſeaſed, he told them, that he had once that Reſolution; but the Importunities of his People, and the Deſire he had to be ſerviceable to them, would not ſuffer him to omit doing it.

In a ſtormy Seaſon, at Nine of the Clock at Night, he adventured to viſit a departing Soul, and and returned not till after Midnight, and ſeemed very glad to be able to perform it; but theſe continual Fatigues made him paſs this Judgment upon himſelf, that he would not long continue, and therefore was in a conſtant Preparation for his Change.

This made him frequently peruſe his Book of *Conſolations againſt Death*, praiſing God who aſſiſted him in publiſhing ſuch an uſeful Work: He was then writing ſeveral other excellent Treatiſes, which he earneſtly deſired to finiſh, with Submiſſion to the great Wiſdom of God, as he expreſſeth himſelf in a Prayer at the End of his Book called *Charitable Viſits*. *Lord* (ſaith he) *I have lived and preached a long Time: I wait for thy Salvation and Deliverance; I am not weary to ſerve ſo good a Maſter, and ſo bountiful a Lord; but, O my God; when it ſhall pleaſe thee to put an End to my Labours, I ſhall depart to a Fulneſs of Joy into thy glorious Reſt.*

This he writ the Year before his Death; the next Year he had ſome Intervals of perfect Health, but they were followed by two dangerous Relapſes: The firſt was in *April*; yet though indiſpoſed, he forced himſelf to preach at *Charenton*, againſt the Advice of his Phyſicians, and he continued in the Exerciſe of his Function. On the 9th of *May* he opened the Synod of *Charenton*, and at the Concluſion of his Speech he received the Applauſes of his Brethren there aſſembled, for which he gave God Thanks for having enabled him with ſo much Strength; and on the 12th of *September*, 1669, being a Faſt-day, he preached again twice in the *Court* of the *Temple*, with much Freedom and Vigour. This Interval of Health continued till the 27th of *October* following, when in his Turn he preached at *Charenton*; and his Auditors found, that he ſpoke with much Freedom, and powerfully. It is remarkable, that he left the Epiſtle of St. *Peter*, that he was expounding before; and choſe for a Text, *Pſal.* li. 7th and 8th Verſes, *Purge me with Hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean; waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than Snow.*

This laſt Sermon was looked upon afterwards as a Preſage he had of his Death, and a Preparation for it, by deſiring the Pardon of his Sins, and a Cleanſing from all the Pollutions of his Fleſh and Spirit, through the infinite Mercy of God, and the Blood of his Saviour. The whole Audience were very well ſatisfied with his laſt Performance, which they judged to be excellent, and worthy to crown all his former religious Exerciſes. At his Return

Return to the City he ſpent the reſt of the Sabbath in Acts of Piety and Charity; and, at his Return Home, being deſirous to enjoy the Company of all his Family then at *Paris*, he ſupped with them, and ſeemed very pleaſant in his Diſcourſe; he continued well on *Monday*, and the next Day, till the 29th of *October*, the fatal Day in which his *mortal Diſtemper* began to attack him; from that Morning he felt an Indiſpoſition, and had no Appetite at Dinner; yet could not forbear viſiting ſick Perſons in his Diſtrict. This good Man came Home very feeble, and out of Order, with a Fever upon him: Some Time after his Speech failed him; and when Mr. *Malnoe* (Advocate in Parliament, his Son-in-Law) was come to viſit him, he was ſcarce able to ſpeak; he was perſuaded to take his Reſt, he ſuddenly fell upon his Knees, and made ſuch an excellent Prayer, that his Family never heard from him one more fervent: He diſcourſed *of the Frailty of human Life, of the Condition he was in, of the Church of God, and inſiſted earneſtly upon her Deliverance*; he prayed for all the Members of his Family; and in this laſt religious Exerciſe performed amongſt his Domeſticks, he omitted nothing material, prayed with Zeal and Vigour, with a clear Voice, and without Heſitation, to their Comfort, and his own Satisfaction, being then only a little feveriſh. In this hopeful Condition he went to Bed; but about Midnight he relapſed again into his former Difficulty of Speech: The Fever increaſing upon him by Degrees, a Phyſician by his Preſcriptions gave him Relief; and he remembered the *Pſalms* which he was wont to repeat, namely, xxxi, xxxii, xxxiv, xli, li, lxiii, cxvi, and cxxx. He had always a great Veneration for the Book of Pſalms, which made him like the reading of *John de Lere*; who writes, how ſome *Savages* of *Brazil* were wonderfully affected and raviſhed at the hearing of one of thoſe divine Hymns ſung. A certain Perſon that came to viſit him, prayed that God would change his Bed of Sickneſs to a Bed of Health: He anſwered, My Bed of Health and Reſt will be in *Paradiſe*. *A noble Lady*, then a cloſe Priſoner, for whom the ſick Perſon had a hign Eſteem, having ſent to enquire of his Health, he told the Meſſenger he was very ſorry for her Confinement, ordered him to preſent his Service to the good Lady, and to tell her, that he ſhould ſee her no more but in Heaven.

During this ſhort Interval, his Mind was free to diſcourſe about his domeſtick Affairs; but in a litttle Time after his Cough and Fever increaſing violently upon him, his Phyſician watched with him till Morning. Our Patient perceiving his dangerous Condition, ſpake in this Manner to him: *Sir, though all good Chriſtians ought continually to be prepared to die, and though God hath granted me the Grace to be ready when he ſhall pleaſe to call me, yet if you find I am drawing to my End, pray give me Notice of it; for I am willing to put my Affairs in Order.* About two or three Hours after, the Phyſician finding he could not live much longer, it was judged

judged convenient by his Son-in-Law to acquaint him with it; to whom he ſpake to this Purpoſe: *I find the Time of my Deliverance is drawing near, and that God will take me to his Reſt. I ſhall be glad to diſcourſe with you privately: I have not only looked upon you as my Son-in-Law, but as my Child, whom I have loved, and tenderly love; I recommend my Family to you Care, and deſire you all to live in perfect Union.* And having given his Leſſon to all his Children, as well abſent as preſent, he ordered the private Affairs of his Family, and the Rewards to be given to thoſe that had been ſerviceable to him in his Sickneſs; and ordered his *Son-in-law* to intreat Mr. *Girard*, the Elder of his Church, to carry this Meſſage to the *Conſiſtory* of *Charenton*, That he died their faithful Servant, and prayed God with all his Heart to preſerve the Church.

After this he ſpent moſt part of his Time in Prayers to God, repeating ſeveral Texts of Scripture, but with ſuch a weak Voice, they could only gueſs by ſome Syllables what he ſaid. He was often heard to repeat the Words of *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; and thoſe of the *Pſalms*, *I have put my Truſt in thee*, &c. *I recommend my Soul into thy Hands.* Thus he continued in his pious Meditations. Then his *Son-in-Law* offered to read to him out of his *Book of Conſolations againſt the Fears of Death*, which he attended to, and ſeemed to be well pleaſed with the *Conſolation for a dying Miniſter*, and with the Prayer appointed for ſuch a one who faced Death with a holy Joy. That is (ſaid he) very good: I don't ſpeak it becauſe it came from me: God be praiſed, that he enabled me to publiſh this Book, to comfort others, and myſelf. The next Morning, the 1ſt of *November*, when Mr. *Girard* came to viſit him, he repeated to him the ſame Words that he had given to his *Son-in-law* in Charge to tell him; and he delivered to him a Bill to be prayed for publickly in the Congregation. At that Time Mr. *Daille*, Mr. *Morus*, and Mr. *Claude* came to ſee him, expreſſing their tender Affection and Concernment for him; at which he ſeemed to be moved. Mr. *Daille* made a pathetick Exhortation, which the Patient kindly accepted; and ſpeaking of the Loſs the Church would ſuſtain by his Death, Mr. *Drelincourt* anſwered, *Sir, You are far more uſeful to her than I can be*; *my Deſire is to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better for me.* At which Words Mr. *Daille* aſked him, Don't you add with the Apoſtle, that it is more neceſſary for the Church that you ſhould continue in the Fleſh? He replied, *God will raiſe Miniſters who ſhall diſcharge their Duty better than I can.* When Mr. *Daille* aſked him whether his Hope was not in the Mercy of God? he anſwered him in divers Texts of Scripture, ſuch as theſe, *I know in whom I have believed*; *I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith*, &c. *I draw towards the Mark of the Prize of the high Calling*, &c.

Mr. *Daille* perceiving how painful his Speech was to him, adviſed him to ſpeak to himſelf, to hinder the Increaſe of his Diſtemper; but he anſwered, *how willing he was to glorify God to the laſt*

laſt Gaſp, and edify by his Speech, ſuch as were there preſent: Then having embraced each other at their parting, Mr. *Daille* told him, he did not altogether deſpair of his Recovery, and that he hoped God would ſave him, according to the Prayers of the Church: He replied, *The Will of the Lord be done, I reſign myſelf entirely to the Order of his Providence.* The two other Miniſters were not wanting in their Prayers and Exhortations. About Noon theſe Gentlemen left him to his Reſt, which he deſired then to take; but inſtead of ſleeping, he was heard to pray very earneſtly three or four Times, and concluded each Prayer with *Our Father*, and *I believe in God*, &c. He gave his Bleſſing to all his Children, and to them that deſired it of him. The Afternoon Mr. *Claude* returned to him again, and continued till Six; our Patient anſwered him diſtinctly, but briefly, by reaſon of his great Weakneſs. About 11 of the Clock at Night, ſeveral Phyſicians came to him; and at the Sight of him they agreed, that there were ſcarce any Hopes of him; mean Time he was praying and addreſſing himſelf to God, but could not be well underſtood. Yet when a Lady, one of his intimate Friends, came to his Bed-ſide, he ſaid, *Madam, You are an Eye-witneſs of my Groans and Sufferings; but I cannot well ſpeak to you.* And about Ten at Night he called to mind that a Pledge of ſome Value had been committed to his Keeping: He ordered it to be taken out of his Cloſet, brought to him, examined if it were all there, and gave Order to reſtore it to the right Owner.

His ſecond Son, Miniſter of the Reformed Church of *Fontainebleau*, came into the Room to ſee his dear Father departing, who knew him, and ſeemed to be moved at the firſt Sight of him: Mr. *Claude* then aſked him if he knew his Son: He anſwered, *Yes*; this was the laſt Word he was heard diſtinctly to ſpeak. His Son aſſiſted his dying Father with his Exhortation and Prayers: He was ſenſible to the laſt, his Countenance never changed till about an Hour before he deceaſed; and though Nature was ſtruggling with the Diſeaſe, and he tormented with a burning Fever, he ſeemed by his Looks to be tranſported with Joy, and full of Comfort. On *Sunday* the fourth of *November*, 1669, this reverend Divine yielded up his Soul to God.

This was the End of this holy and zealous Servant of God, who departed this Life in the 74th Year of his Age, the 52d Year of his Miniſtry, and in the 50th Year after his being called to ſerve the Reformed Church of *Paris*. He died in the Bed of Honour, in the Exerciſe of the Duties of his Function, preaching the Goſpel, writing in Vindication of the Truth, and comforting the Sick, &c.

The eloquent Tongue of Mr. *Daille* and Mr. *Morus*, from the Pulpit of *Charenton*, the Tears of the whole Congregation that Day and the next, when they committed his Body to the Grave, in expectation of a joyful Reſurrection (in a Word, the Commendation

mendation of People of both Religions) ſufficiently verified the Saying of *Solomon*, *The Memory of the Juſt is bleſſed.* The Pourtraiture of his excellent, learned, and religious Mind may be ſeen in his Works, particularly in this uſeful and comfortable Treatiſe, *The Conſolations againſt the Fears of Death.*

We doubt not but he is gone to receive in Heaven the incorruptible Crown of Glory, which the great God and Redeemer of our Souls promiſeth of his Mercy to all faithful Servants. God grant we may imitate his excellent Life, and follow him in his happy End!

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The Meditations and Prayers, proper for every Condition, are at the End of the several Chapters unto which they belong.

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